

Pusan American
senior Brianna Carroll



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At least 3 dead, 580 hurt in Japan; Kanto Plain bases spared

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Shore good to be home

Kitty Hawk back from successful deployment to western Pacific

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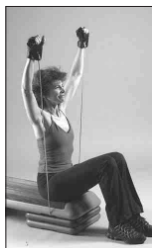
JASON T. POPLIN/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

USS Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group sailors leave the ship after completing a two-month deployment in the western Pacific Ocean. Kitty Hawk's return to Yokosuka, Japan, follows a successful at-sea period that included involvement in the Summer Pulse '04 readiness demonstration and Joint Air and Sea Exercise '04. Sailors got two days of liberty before they had to get back to work.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Wine country wildfires: Firefighters hoped moist air would help them get the upper hand on a fire that has burned more than 12,000 acres of land in California's wine country.

The moist air was expected Tuesday morning, which would help firefighters control the Sonoma County fire. Four homes, eight outbuildings and 12 cars have been destroyed, and about 40 residents have been evacuated from the area, about 60 miles north of San Francisco.

World

Milosevic trial: Slobodan Milosevic's court-appointed lawyers called the first witness in his defense case Tuesday, as the former Yugoslav president demanded he be handed back the right to represent himself before the U.N. war crimes tribunal.

The first defense witness, Milosevic's former law professor Smilja Avramov, testified about her years as the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry's legal adviser before the wars that tore Yugoslavia apart and about Serbia's perception of the nationalist threats against them.

Sudan hunger crisis: Seasonal rains and continued violence hampered efforts last month by the U.N. food agency to reach the hungry in Darfur, Sudan, where fighting involving rebels, government troops and militias believed backed by the government has created a humanitarian disaster.

"Perhaps the most serious obstacle of all is the sheer scale of the crisis," the World Food Program said in a statement Tuesday, adding that the scattering of more than a million people in need across an underdeveloped area the size of France "is one of the sternest challenges confronting WFP."

Fujimori extradition: A Supreme Court judge said Monday that Peru will not provide additional testimony requested by Japan to justify extradition of former President Alberto Fujimori to face allegations he authorized death squad massacres a decade ago.

Peru submitted the extradition request in July 2003, more than 2½ years after Fujimori fled Peru in November 2000 amid a spiraling corruption scandal.

Prosecutors allege Fujimori authorized two massacres of suspected rebel collabora-



CHARLIE WHISTYNE/Courtesy U.S. Navy

Stennis success: Aboard the USS John C. Stennis, Petty Officer 1st Class Christopher Smith from Ocala, Fla., communicates with flight deck control that a successful launch was completed. The Stennis and Carrier Air Wing 14 are currently taking part in a scheduled deployment to the western Pacific Ocean.

tors — a charge the former president denies.

U.N. Security Council: A permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council would allow Japan to contribute more to global peace and stability, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Tuesday.

Koizumi plans to argue for a council seat during an upcoming trip to the United Nations.

South Korea nuclear program: South Korea will send a delegation to the U.N. nuclear watchdog's headquarters in Austria next week to explain an unauthorized nuclear experiment and pledge transparency in its nuclear operations, officials said Tuesday.

"The delegation will explain that the uranium experiment was conducted by only a few scientists for purely academic purposes, and the government will seek transparency on experiment procedures from now on," said Son Yong-wan, the Foreign Ministry's deputy director general of disarmament.

China porn crackdown: Chinese makers and distributors of pornographic materials sent through the Internet, mobile phones and

other communication devices will face penalties as severe as life in prison under new rules that took effect Monday.

The crackdown is part of a renewed campaign for greater control over the Internet by authorities, who have closed thousands of Internet cafes, stepped up surveillance and fortified filters aimed at shutting out objectionable material.

War on terrorism

Afghanistan fighting: Afghan security forces clashed with dozens of Taliban militiamen who raided a government office in a southern province, leaving one soldier and four of the rebel fighters dead, officials said Tuesday.

Two other Taliban fighters were killed and two captured in a separate clash with U.S. troops and Afghan government forces in another part of southern Zabul province.

In other fighting on Monday, Taliban opened fire on American and Afghan forces who were searching for militants in Sor district, said Zabul Gov. Khilal Mohammed. Two Taliban fighters were killed and two others — one of them wounded — were captured.

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PHOTOS BY GREG TYLER/Stars and Stripes

Above: Normally the home of the four Landing Craft Utilities belonging to Assault Craft Unit One, Sasebo Detachment, the ACU-1 Juliet Basin pier was empty Tuesday as the winds swirled around Sasebo Naval Base from Typhoon Songda.

Left: The only vehicles moving on Sasebo Naval Base on Tuesday were those operated by the Security Department. The base was closed to all but mission-essential personnel as Typhoon Songda made its way through the area with projected sustained winds of 93 mph and gusts up to 121 mph.

Sasebo spared brunt of Songda's punch

Bases on Kanto Plain get lots of wind but little rain from typhoon

BY VINCE LITTLE
AND GREG TYLER
Stars and Stripes

Typhoon Songda brought gusty winds but very little rainfall to the Kanto Plain as it skirted just to the west Tuesday night. Most U.S. military bases heard the All-Clear signal at about 6 a.m., said 2nd Lt. Rob Branham, the wing weather officer for the 374th Operations Support Squadron.

"We had a good batch of showers come through between 1 and 3 a.m.," he said. "But a lot of the rain stayed off to our southwest, west of Mount Fuji."

There were no reports of damage or injuries on the Kanto Plain, which received just 10 inches of rainfall, Branham said, while the highest reported wind gust was 55 mph at Haneda Airport.

Songda passed through the Kanto Plain rapidly early Wednesday, moving northwest of the region at a 45 mph clip.

"We really saw the diminishing effects of it this morning," Branham said. "It's still classified as a tropical storm, but it's really just a deep area of low pressure right now. What's left of it is pushing northeast near Hakkaido at about 60 mph. It's going to be headed up well north of Hakkaido and moving toward the Aleutian chains."

Military forecasters were predicting a very hot, sunny day on the Kanto Plain on Wednesday, with highs approaching the mid-90s.

Songda was the fifth typhoon to threaten the Kanto Plain this year, Branham said.

Iwakuni Marine Corps Air Station weathered typhoon-force winds for hours Tuesday. Forecasters had expected the typhoon to approach no closer than about 86 miles but Songda came within 20 miles of the facility, Chief Warrant Officer David Fulton, station weather officer, said Tuesday night.

"We had sustained winds for several hours of about 70 mph, with gusts up to 100 mph," Fulton said Tuesday night, as the typhoon's effects began to weaken in Iwakuni. "We didn't believe it would hit us this hard. It just wasn't supposed to happen."

Base spokesman Capt. Stewart Tipton said he would release no information about possible damages or injuries on the base until Wednesday.

The typhoon pounded Japan's southern



Some Sasebo base personnel living off base in older homes were extended an invitation from base commander Capt. Michael James to stay on base in bachelor housing. As Typhoon Songda was heavily huffing and puffing Tuesday morning, this young woman stood in the BOH windowsill trying to get a good look at the wild weather.

main island of Kyushu with heavy rains and strong winds Tuesday, forcing thousands to evacuate their homes and knocking out power to over a million households, the Associated Press reported.

Across Japan, 580 people were injured and eight people were killed, Japanese media reported, although police confirmed only three deaths.

Rescuers were searching for the 22 crew members of an Indonesian cargo ship that ran aground and was flooded. Police and coast guard were also investigating reports that stormy seas sank a Cambodia-registered freighter carrying 18 Russian crew in western Hattakachi harbor. Two died and three still were missing, a Hiroshima Coast Guard Bureau spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

The Associated Press also reported a

62-year-old man was buried in a mudslide in southern Kogoshima prefecture. He was rescued and taken to a hospital, but he later died, a local police spokesman said.

Air and train travel was canceled over much of the affected area and some expressways were closed, transportation officials reported Tuesday.

The most severe damages reported on Okinawa, however, were scattered power outages, downed tree limbs and some broken glass.

Sasebo Naval Base in southern Japan also escaped the potential storm damage. Songda was predicted to inflict Tuesday morning. The highest sustained winds on base reached just 40 mph and the strongest gust just 63 mph at 9:27 a.m., although Nagasaki City, about 50 miles southeast of Sasebo, had maximum wind gusts of 94 miles per hour around 9 a.m.

Sasebo issued the TCCOR All-Clear around 3:15 p.m., although a small-farm warning remained in effect into the early evening.

A survey of Sasebo base facilities revealed no major structural damages; officials reported no injuries to base personnel.

Sasebo's Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Detachment tallied the following conditions on base during Typhoon Songda's passage:

- The closest point of approach was 12 miles to the southeast at 10:10 a.m.
- The maximum sustained wind was from the northeast at 40 mph at 6:53 a.m.
- The maximum gust came from the northeast at 63 mph at 9:27 a.m.
- The storm's total precipitation was 2.47 inches.

Late Tuesday afternoon, winds dwindled to from 17 mph to 23 mph, gusting to 40 mph.

Elsewhere in the area, Songda appeared to inconvenience more than damage. Hideki Ikenatsu, spokesman for the Crisis Management and Disaster Prevention Department of the Nagasaki Prefectural government, said, "A total of 3,022 people (1,969 families) in Nagasaki, Hirado and Goto Island voluntarily evacuated." He said six people in the prefecture received injuries during the typhoon.

The spokesman said 82,800 households in Nagasaki Prefecture lost power during Typhoon Songda "but there was no report of any flooding or damages to the public roads."

Major expressways in Kyushu and the Chugoku districts closed, and the typhoon forced the cancellation of at least 448 flights in Kyushu and Chugoku, according to a Japanese news report.

Radar showed that Typhoon Songda made landfall at approximately 9:40 a.m., 23 miles to the south of the Sasebo base. Radar also showed Typhoon Songda continued to make jogs to the east as it moved north-northeast at 17 mph.

As he did last week when Typhoon Chaba approached, base commander Capt. Michael James made rooms available in bachelor housing to those living off base who did not feel safe in their own housing.

Greg Tyler and Nancy Montgomery contributed to this report.
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Kitty Hawk back, but not bored, at Yokosuka

Crew caps summer of exercises, inspections with a little time off

By NANCY MONTGOMERY

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Kitty Hawk moored at Yokosuka Naval Base one day after Labor Day, after a busy summer cruise filled with exercises, inspections and ty-

phoons.

But for Kitty Hawk sailors, the labor never ends.

"We're going to give liberty as much as possible today and tomorrow, but we have to hit right back into it on Thursday," Lt. Cmdr. Brook DeWalt, Kitty Hawk spokesman, said Tuesday afternoon.

On Thursday, DeWalt said, more than 1,000 E-4s were expected to take the Navy Advancement Exam, which tests their knowledge in their rates, toward promotion to E-5.

After that comes a scheduled maintenance period with all sorts of work to be done on the 43-year-old carrier, the oldest working ship in the fleet. "Just because we're in port doesn't mean the work isn't there," DeWalt said.

The ship and its crew of some 5,000 departed from Yokosuka July 19 and took part in what the Navy called "Summer Pulse 2004." It was the first time six carrier strike groups all deployed in waters around the world within 30 days.

The ship and its crew of some 5,000 departed from Yokosuka July 19 and took part in what the Navy called "Summer Pulse 2004." It was the first time six carrier strike groups all deployed in waters around the world within 30 days.

In the meantime, Carrier Air Wing 5 aviators and air crews engaged in joint operations with the USS John C. Stennis and the Air Force, even as typhoons forced the carriers to maneuver around the seas to dodge the worst of the weather and forced aviators and crew to work in rolling seas and on a pitching deck.

Then there was another inspection. The Tailored Ship's Training Availability preceded a final evaluation of the ship's operational readiness. The tally, as decided by a team from the Afloat Train-



ANDREW WISKOW/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Petty Officer 2nd Class Brenton Davis of Meadville, Pa., a gunner's mate, holds training Monday on the 9 mm pistol for a group of sailors preparing to qualify on the weapon. Sailors are required to qualify on a 9 mm pistol prior to standing any armed watches in port. The Kitty Hawk moored at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Tuesday morning after a busy summer.

ing Group Pacific, was 377 out of 400.

What was up with the ship, which hasn't always scored so highly and is expected to be decommissioned by 2008?

"I think we are gaining a culture of excellence on board here," Cmdr. Gary Peterson, Kitty Hawk executive officer, remarked in a news release.

Capt. Tom Parker called it "an outbreak of excellence," according to the release, and said sailors had proved "Kitty Hawk, although the oldest ship in the fleet, is just as capable as any carrier in the fleet, and better than most."

On a final inspection, of the ship's supply department, the department scored "outstanding" or "excellent" in all categories.

"The most important aspect is we continuously did great on in-

spection after inspection," DeWalt said. "The key is we didn't take any of them for granted."

And, he noted, ships that are forward-deployed must be ready for and undergo the inspections while conducting operations. Stateside ships, on the other hand, usually have the luxury of conducting operations and inspections during separate periods.

Sailors got a brief respite Aug. 19 when the ship pulled into port in Guam. They were scheduled to stay several days. Many had booked hotel rooms.

But on Aug. 21, the ship made an emergency recall to escape Typhoon Chaba. Sailors rushed back aboard. And it was back to work.

E-mail Nancy Montgomery at: montgomeryn@pistripes.osd.mil



THOMAS GODDARD/Courtesy of U.S. Navy

Petty Officer 1st Class Ryan Delcoro of Greenville, Texas, spreads toppings onto a pizza Monday during the final night of USS Kitty Hawk's just-ended underway period. Petty officers first class treated fellow sailors to pizza.

Admiral to visit Japan

The U.S. Navy's top officer will be visiting Japan and three of its U.S. bases this week.

Adm. Vern Clark's itinerary includes Misawa Air Base on Wednesday and Yokosuka Naval Base and Atsugi Naval Air Facility on Thursday.

On Thursday, he'll also be in Tokyo to meet with U.S. Embassy staff and officials. In Yokosuka, Clark is to meet with command master chiefs; at Atsugi, he is to meet with commanders and flight officers.



Clark

Clark, a four-star admiral, is the senior military officer of the Navy, reporting to the secretary of the Navy regarding naval command, use of resources and operating efficiency. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CNO also is the principal naval adviser to the president on war conduct.

Clark was scheduled to visit Japan in June but the trip was canceled after a tire on his aircraft reportedly blew out on take-off in Alaska.

From staff reports

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Bill aims at shielding troops from scams

BY SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Fed up with a system that he says scans young, unassuming servicemen's Rep. Max Burns (R-Ga.) introduced a bill Tuesday to ban the sale of "questionable financial products," such as some types of insurance and mutual funds, on

military bases.

"It is an outrage that financial products that were found so disreputable that they disappeared from the civilian market 20 years ago have continued to survive on-post, by being pawned off on unsuspecting young service people as part of 'approved' savings and insurance plans," Burns said in a statement.

"In addition, we have far too many unscrupulous insurance companies using federal military property to dodge state insurance commissioners and sell overpriced policies, with virtually no oversight. We cannot allow those who defend our freedom to continue to be unfairly targeted for the sale of dubious financial products."

If passed, the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act would change federal securities laws to ban the sale of contractual mutual funds that cost participants up to half of their first-year contributions, and for products that young troops cannot afford or don't need, such as redundant life insurance, Burns said.

It also clarifies that insurance sales representatives operating in state insurance commission regulations and laws, even if the products are sold on federal land.

But how the law might apply to insurance sales at overseas bases has yet to be determined.

"We don't know how to plug that hole just yet," said John Stone, Burns' press secretary. "We're looking for good suggestions from the committee."

The bill, introduced Tuesday, is scheduled for a Thursday hearing before the House Financial Services Committee.

Paul Cozby, a spokesman for First Command Financial Planning Inc. in Texas, told The New York Times last week that the company would support and comply with any changes Congress decided to make in the law governing contractual plans.

"In fact, we have discussed with Mr. Burns some of these changes and have offered ideas for industry improvements," Cozby said in the newspaper's report.

Georgia's chief insurance regulator, John Oxendine, has taken the lead of state commissioners investigating product sales to troops. He is working with Judge Advocate General officials at military bases in Georgia who will help in getting documents and statements from soldiers who might have been duped, he said.

Investigators also are looking for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan who might have bought insurance products as safeguards before deploying to combat zones, he said.

"The allegation is that in some cases... soldiers were sold unlicensed products," Oxendine said in an interview. "Another allegation is that many products, even though licensed, were sold using misleading or improper sales tactics. The advertising was misleading, or implied government involvement or approval, was confusing about what the product was, as in the soldier thought he was buying one thing but actually was buying something else."

Though still very early in the process, there is a chance that, if sales are proved fraudulent, servicemen might be able to recoup lost money, Oxendine said.

Troops need to contact state insurance commissioners in the state in which the products were bought, he recommended. If products were purchased overseas, Oxendine suggests servicemen begin the process by contacting insurance commissioners in their home state and their respective service inspector general.

However, claims could take years to recoup, if at all, since not all states have launched formal criminal investigations.

The Government Accountability Office, Congress' investigative arm, is designing a study of military insurance sales to look at the process that the installations use to process allotments for insurance policies, how closely installations adhere to Defense Department regulations on the sale of insurance, and whether insurance companies are complying with the laws, said Derek Stewart, director for military and DOD civilian personnel issues.

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontzs@stripes.osd.mil

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Report: Halliburton's Iraq contract to get bids

WASHINGTON — Halliburton Co.'s multibillion dollar contract for work to support U.S. troops in Iraq will be put back up for bids, according to an Army memo, The Wall Street Journal reported Tuesday.

The company, formerly headed by Vice President Dick Cheney, has come under scrutiny amid allegations of overcharging and poor accounting. The contract, to feed and house U.S. troops in Iraq, is valued at up to \$13 billion. The Journal quoted a Halliburton spokesman as saying the move was expected and that its Kellogg Brown & Root unit may bid again for parts of the work.

The awarding of the no-bid contract to Halliburton has been attacked by Democrats because of Cheney's connections to the company. Cheney led Halliburton from 1995 to 2000.

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6 soldiers killed in 2 days of Iraq clashes

BY HAMZA HENDAWI
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — U.S. troops battled Shiite militiamen loyal to rebel cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the Baghdad slum of Sadr City on Tuesday in fierce fighting that killed 36 people, including one U.S. soldier, and wounded more than 200 civilians.

The fighting in Sadr City erupted when militiamen attacked U.S. forces carrying out routine patrols, killing one American soldier, according to U.S. Army Capt. Brian O'Malley.

The soldier was among six

American troops who died Tuesday in separate incidents in the Baghdad area. The latest deaths brought to 997 the number of U.S. servicemen who have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count based on Defense Department records, AP reporting from Iraq, and reports from soldiers' families.

A senior Health Ministry official, Saad al-Amili, said a total of 35 people have been killed and 203 injured in the Sadr City clashes.

An al-Sadr spokesman in Bag-

dad, Sheik Raed al-Kadhimi, blamed "intrusive" American patrolling for provoking the fighting.

"Our fighters have no choice but to return fire and to face the U.S. forces and helicopters pounding our houses," al-Kadhimi said in a statement.

Late Tuesday, the militia announced a unilateral cease-fire but said it would fight back in self-defense. It was unclear whether the statement had any meaning since the militia routinely defends its actions as legitimate self-defense.

O'Malley, the U.S. Army captain, said he was unaware of the

cease-fire offer but that the area was quiet in the early evening.

"We only fire when we are fired at, but we will not stop our patrols or withdraw from our positions," he said.

During the fighting, U.S. warplanes flew over the sprawling neighborhood — home to some 2 million people. American tanks, their turrets spinning, deployed in key intersections. Ambulances with sirens wailing rushed the wounded to hospitals as plumes of heavy black smoke rose over the mainly Shiite neighborhood.

Roads leading to the area were blocked by the fighters using

rocks and tires. By afternoon, most stores in the neighborhood were shuttered.

The violence was not limited to the Shiite enclave. Earlier Tuesday, a bomb exploded near the convoy of the governor of the Baghdad region, killing two people. Gov. Ali al-Haidri escaped injury. Interior Ministry spokesman Col. Adnan Abdel Rahman said.

Al-Sadr aides said the fighting broke out after talks with interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi's government stalled. Those talks followed a deal last month to end fighting between U.S. troops and al-Sadr's forces in Najaf.



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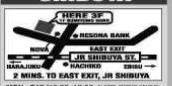
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Israel airstrike kills 14 at Hamas camp

BY IBRAHIM BARZAK
The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israeli helicopters attacked a Hamas training camp early Tuesday, killing at least 14 militants and wounding 30 others in one of the deadliest airstrikes since fighting broke out four years ago.

The attack came a week after Hamas suicide bombers blew up two buses in the Israeli city of Beersheba, killing 16 people.

In an unusually strong statement, Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia warned that that airstrike would bring Hamas re-

Queria says militant retaliation would be 'justified'

taliation, which he said would be "justified."

"No crime goes unpunished," Qureia said of the Israeli attack at a meeting of the Palestinian Cabinet. "For sure there will be retaliation, and the retaliation will be justified if it happens."

Hamas, which has carried out dozens of deadly attacks inside Israel, vowed revenge. Hours after the attack, Palestinian militants fired mortars and homemade rockets at Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and the border

town of Sderot. One Israeli in Sderot was slightly wounded in a rocket attack, rescue officials said.

The army said it struck a field where "senior Hamas terrorists" had trained militants to fire mortars and rockets. In the past month, Hamas assembled a large bomb and a suicide bomber's explosives belt at the training camp, the army added.

"No one is immune when he carries out terrorist attacks against innocent Israeli civil-

ians," said Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom.

In Gaza City, children stayed home from school Tuesday and shops remained closed in a sign of mourning. Black smoke billowed over the city as students burned tires at spontaneous demonstrations.

Some 30,000 people, including dozens of gunmen from Hamas and other militant groups, joined a funeral procession Tuesday in Gaza City. As militants fired machine guns into the air, the crowd screamed for revenge.

"Our response to this crime is coming. God willing, and our main attack in Beersheba is only one part of many strikes to come," a Hamas militant screamed over loudspeakers mounted on a car.

In the West Bank, Qureia said the airstrikes undermined peace efforts, noting that it came a day after Egyptian officials visited the West Bank. Israel is planning to withdraw from Gaza next year, and Egypt has stepped in as a mediator to ensure security in the area after the pullout.

Tuesday's attack was the first time the army has targeted such a large gathering of militants.



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Russians rally against terror as funerals go on in south

BY MARIA DANILOVA
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — Waving flags and banners, tens of thousands of Russians demonstrated against terrorism Tuesday, massing outside the Kremlin in response to calls for solidarity by President Vladimir Putin's government after a series of deadly attacks that have killed more than 400 people.

The growing crowd stood still for a moment of silence in memory of victims, starting the rally after a clock atop the Kremlin's Spassky Tower struck 5 p.m.

"I have been crying for so many days and I came here to feel that we are actually together," said pensioner Vera Danilova, 57.

There was, however, criticism of the gathering. The Gazeta.ru Web site commented that there was "no doubt that its organizers, in the first place, will express solidarity not with the victims of terrorist acts... but with President Vladimir Putin."

In an interview late Monday with a group of foreign journalists and academics visiting for a special conference, Putin vehemently denied a link between Russia's policies in Chechnya and last week's hostage-taking. He again rejected Western calls for negotiations with Chechen rebel representatives. Britain's Guardian and Independent newspapers reported.

"Why don't you meet Osama bin Laden, invite him to Brussels or to the White House and engage in talks, ask him what he wants and give it to him so he leaves you in peace?" the Guardian quoted Putin as saying sarcastically.

"You find it possible to set some limitations in your dealings with these bastards, so why should we talk to people who are child-killers?"

He also said his government would conduct an internal investigation but not a public one — warning that a parliamentary inquiry could turn into "a political show."

Princess confined by illness

Japan's Masako not likely to return soon to duties

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Palace doctors believe Japan's Crown Princess Masako, who has spent the past eight months in seclusion fighting a stress-induced illness, will not likely resume her royal duties until sometime next year, officials said Monday.

The pronouncement by palace doctors treating the princess comes as her husband and Japan's royal heir, Crown Prince Naruhito, prepares to head Wednesday for Brunei, where he is to attend the gala wedding of the tiny sultanate's Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah.

Once again, however, the 44-year-old Naruhito will be going alone. On Monday an official said Masako's doctors believe she still needs a good deal more time to recover.

Palace officials have tried to play down Masako's illness, offering only the thinnest of explanations

since the 40-year-old princess withdrew from the public eye late last December.

Amid increasing calls for openness, the palace announced in July that Masako was suffering from an adaptive disorder and was being treated through counseling and drug therapy.

Masako's disappearance has been a great disappointment to the Japanese public, who had hoped the affable and cosmopolitan princess might add a spark to Japan's famously staid and tradition-bound imperial family.

Before falling ill, Masako complained she was disappointed by the infrequent trips abroad she has been allowed to take. Critics have suggested palace officials were reluctant to let her travel until she produces a male heir to succeed her husband.

Masako and Naruhito have one child, the 2-year-old Princess Aiko. Under Japanese succession laws only males are eligible for the throne.



Japan's Crown Princess Masako, with her husband, Crown Prince Naruhito, leaves her residence for the first time in four months to visit her in-laws, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko on Saturday at the palace in Tokyo.

Viking site uncovered in England

The Associated Press

LONDON — A burial site of six Viking men and women, complete with swords, spears, jewelry, fire-making materials and riding equipment, has been found in England, officials said.

The site, discovered near Cumwhitton in northwestern England, is believed to date to the early 10th century, and archaeologists working there called it one of the few Viking burial grounds ever found in Britain.

The only other known Viking cemetery in England was found in Ingleby, east of Cumwhitton. It was excavated in the 1940s, but the bodies had been cremated and not buried.

A Viking war grave uncovered near Repton in central England contains the remains of 249 individuals, but is an ad-hoc battlefield site rather than a formal cemetery.

"This is tremendous news, a unique discovery which will improve people's understanding of the area and its history," council chairman Mark Wood said on Monday.

The Vikings, inhabitants of Scandinavia from 800 to 1100, traded with and raided much of Europe, often settling there. They invaded and conquered England in 1013.

Japanese who was held hostage seeks return to Iraq

The Associated Press

TOKYO — A Japanese aid worker held hostage by Iraqi militants for a week in April said Tuesday she hopes to return to Iraq to continue her humanitarian work.

"I think I'll go back. There is still a lot of unfinished business there for me," Nahoko Takato

told the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan.

Takato was one of three Japanese taken hostage by insurgents who threatened to burn them alive unless Tokyo withdrew its troops from Iraq. Two other Japanese were taken hostage separately in Iraq around the same time.

Japan refused to withdraw its troops, and all five were later re-

leased unharmed.

Takato, who was traumatized by the experience and rarely appears in public, returned to Amman, Jordan, this summer to work on rebuilding Iraqi schools destroyed in the war and job-training.

While she has supported Tokyo's decision not to withdraw Japanese troops as demanded by

her captors, she expressed doubts about whether armed soldiers are effective aid workers.

"I've always been skeptical about whether you can carry out humanitarian work when you're holding a weapon," Takato said.

Japanese soldiers are in Samawah, Iraq, on a non-combat mission to purify water and perform other aid work.

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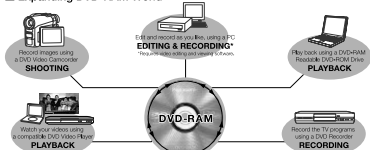
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Candidates turn attention to jobs

Bush calls for legal reforms; Kerry focuses on outsourcing

By PETE YOST
The Associated Press

President Bush and rival Sen. John Kerry on Tuesday offered different ways to boost the sluggish job market, the president calling for legal reforms to help workers and businesses while his Democratic opponent proposed ending tax breaks for companies that send jobs overseas.

Kerry, moving aggressively in the face of polls showing his candidacy lagging, used the latest forecast of a record budget deficit to bolster his contention that Bush is leading the country in the wrong direction. The Bush admin-

istration described the lower deficit prediction as positive economic news.

In his second day of campaigning in Missouri, a state he won in 2000 by just 79,000 votes out of 2.3 million cast, Bush told a rally in suburban Kansas City that Kerry had stood in the way of legal reforms that would help generate jobs and protect workers and businesses. He called Kerry "one of the trial lawyers" most reliable allies in the Senate.

Bush, linking Kerry policies to campaign donations from trial attorneys, said "junk lawsuits" hinder job creation and cost the



AP photos

President Bush pets Duke, an 8-week-old basset hound belonging to Cathy Reynolds of Warrensburg, Mo., during an unscheduled campaign stop Tuesday.

economy more than \$230 billion a year.

With the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office predicting this year's federal deficit will reach \$422 billion — less than earlier forecasts but still the highest ever — Kerry told supporters in North Carolina that the deficit represented other bad Bush choices.

"Only George W. Bush could celebrate over a record budget deficit of \$422 billion, a loss of 1.6 million jobs and Medicare premiums that are up by a record 17 percent," Kerry said. "W stands for wrong — the wrong direction for America."

Kerry said he would end tax breaks for companies that outsource overseas, a potent issue in North Carolina and other states that have suffered job losses.

"Because of George Bush's wrong choices, this country is continuing to ship good jobs overseas — jobs with good wages and good benefits," Kerry said.

Kerry's criticism on the economic front came a day after he leveled harsh criticism at Bush over the war in Iraq, declaring that the president had sent U.S. troops to the "wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Bush dismissed Kerry's remarks on the war as yet another switch in position by a senator who originally voted to give the president the authority to act in Iraq.

"No matter how many times Senator Kerry changes his mind, it was right for America then and it's right for America now if Saddam Hussein is no longer in power," the president told supporters Monday in Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Kerry's plan to deal with the problem of outsourcing jobs would eliminate rules allowing companies to defer paying taxes on income earned by their foreign subsidiaries until they bring the profits back to the United States.

Kerry says the elimination would ensure that American companies will be taxed on their foreign subsidiaries' profits just like they are taxed on their domestic profits.

"He's actually encouraging the export of American jobs," Kerry said of Bush's support for the current rules.

The president's plan for dealing with job losses is through job training, increased funding for community colleges and creation of "opportunity zones" of reduced taxes.

Bush said the jobs picture is improving, largely due to tax cuts that he said have helped push down the unemployment rate to 5.4 percent.

The economy "is strong and is getting stronger," Bush told a Labor Day crowd in Poplar Bluff.

Political analysts point to one potential problem for Kerry in Missouri — lingering bitterness in the Democratic Party's ranks over a primary election that ousted incumbent Democratic Gov. Bob Holden. Kerry needs a huge turnout of loyal Democrats to win the state in November.

Missouri Democrats see their ticket as generating a lot of enthusiasm among voters, with women running for governor, U.S. Senate and secretary of state. The Kerry campaign sees Bush's frequent trips to Missouri as an indication the campaign sees trouble ahead.

No decision about review of Kerry's Navy records

Stars and Stripes

The Navy has not decided whether it will investigate Sen. John Kerry's war record after receiving a request to do so by a public interest group, a Navy spokesman said Tuesday.

In an August 18 letter to the Defense Department, Judicial Watch requested an investigation into the "determination and final disposition of the awards granted to Lieutenant (junior grade) John Forbes Kerry, U.S. Naval Reserve."

The Defense Department passed the request on to the Navy.

Navy Cmdr. Conrad Chun of the Navy Office of Information said the Navy "has not decided what it will do with the request," but that the inspector general would review it.

Kerry, the Democratic Party nominee for president, has been under fire from Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, a group of veterans who served in Vietnam at the same time, about whether he earned the Vietnam decorations Kerry has made central to his campaign for the presidency.

Kerry was wounded in action and subsequently awarded three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star and a Bronze Star.

Nader's ballot bid

RICHMOND, Va. — Independent Ralph Nader will not appear on Virginia's presidential ballot, the State Board of Elections said Tuesday.

Nader fell short of the required 10,000 certified signatures on his qualifying petitions, said Jean Jensen, secretary of the board.

"He needed 10,000 and we were able to verify 7,342," Jensen said.

Nader had submitted about 12,000 signatures, and officials checked them against local voter lists.

Nader has met requirements to appear on ballots in 20 states, Zeise said, including nine actively contested by President Bush and Democratic challenger Sen. John Kerry.

From The Associated Press



Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry gives a thumbs up to supporters Tuesday during a town hall meeting at the J. Douglas Gayton Depot in Greensboro, N.C.



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Study: More PE time may fight girls' obesity

By RICK CALLAHAN
The Associated Press

Just an extra hour of exercise a week could significantly cut obesity among young overweight girls, according to a study that researchers say could lead to major changes in the way schools fight obesity.

The study — the largest look yet at obesity among young children — did not show the same results for boys, possibly because they generally get more exercise than girls.

Still, Dr. Rebecca Ungar, a pediatrician at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, said the findings show the important role schools can play to prevent obesity and its health ramifications.

She said the study highlights the impor-

ance of funding daily physical education in the nation's schools, which have 9 percent of children and adolescents are overweight, according to government figures.

"This is incredibly serious if you consider the medical and emotional consequences of obesity. The further along these problems progress, the more at risk these children are," said Ungar, who was not involved in the research.

In the study of 11,000 children, researchers compared changes in the body-mass index — a measure of weight relative to height — of obese and overweight girls in kindergarten and first grade.

They found that the prevalence of obesity and being overweight among the girls fell 10 percent in schools that gave first-graders

one hour more of exercise time per week than their kindergartners.

Based on that, the researchers believe that giving kindergartners at least five hours of physical education time per week — the amount recommended by the federal government — could potentially reduce the prevalence of obesity and overweight among girls by 43 percent.

"This has the ability to affect tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of children. The implications are so big because this is something we can do as a society," said Nancy Chockley, president of the National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation.

The Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit group recently released a research brief on the study, and two other studies of childhood obesity.

The analyses were done by the Rand Corp., a think tank that used data collected by the U.S. Department of Education as part of a long-term study of 11,192 children from about 1,000 schools who entered kindergarten in 1998.

Yale University obesity researcher Kelly Brownell said the findings are significant because they demonstrate the importance of making sure children get adequate physical activity — in or out of school.

But he said exercise must be tied with better eating habits — including rethinking school lunch programs and the presence of school vending machines laden with high-calorie snacks — to fully address the nation's growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

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'Street skaters' get legal places to play

BY MARTHA IRVINE
The Associated Press

KETTERING, Ohio — He's turned professional and achieved rock-star status among legions of fellow skateboarders. But even Rob Dyrdek sometimes has trouble finding legal places to do what he refers to as his "job."

"I get paid a ridiculous amount of money to do what I do, and I still have to run from cops and jump fences," says Dyrdek, an Ohio native who now lives in San Diego. "I don't want to do that. I want to be able to get up every day and skate — in legal places."

We're not talking ramps and quarter-pipes here — elements commonly found in the many skateboard parks cities have built in recent years.

Dyrdek is a "street skater," the kind who uses railings, ledges and steps to do tricks. His is also the style of skateboarding that, while wildly popular, often draws the wrath of officials and building

owners in cities where he and others skate.

Philadelphia, for instance, has made skateboarding off-limits in LOVE Park, a public space with a plaza-and-ledge design that unintentionally made it a mecca for skaters from all over the world.

Slowly, however, officials in more cities are hearing the street skaters' pleas — and beginning to make peace with them by incorporating elements that appeal to them in newer skate park designs.

In Virginia Beach, Va., city officials have turned an old landfill into the Mount Trashmore Skate Park, which includes the usual "bowl" found in many skate parks but which also has steps and railings.

A new skate park in Brainerd, Minn., built with funding from Chicago-based playground developer KaBOOM!, also has all those things and picnic tables that skaters can use to do tricks without fear of getting in trouble.



Professional skateboarder Rob Dyrdek compares photos of street scenes with drawings of a planned Ohio skateboard park. Many cities are creating "street skater" parks due to a growing interest in the sport.

"Skaters who want half-pipes and ramps — they're, like, really old — not people our age," says 12-year-old Tony Augustinck, one of several youths who helped design and build the Brainerd

park.

Meanwhile, Dyrdek is using his clout as a pro and funding from skateboarding accessories company DC Shoes to help build a public skate plaza specifically for street skaters in his hometown, Kettering, Ohio.

The pyramidlike plaza, slated to open next year, is tucked amid ball fields, a swimming pool and running track — a pretty mainstream setting considering street skating's rebellious, underground roots.

But parks superintendent Frank Postle says Kettering officials, who built a BMX bike track in the early 1980s, have a history of embracing "fringe sports."

And if adults don't appreciate that, he says, "kids certainly do."

Ben Tubb, a teen from Texas, has only seen the plans for Kettering's plaza online. But he says it's obvious that a skater helped design it — something he thinks

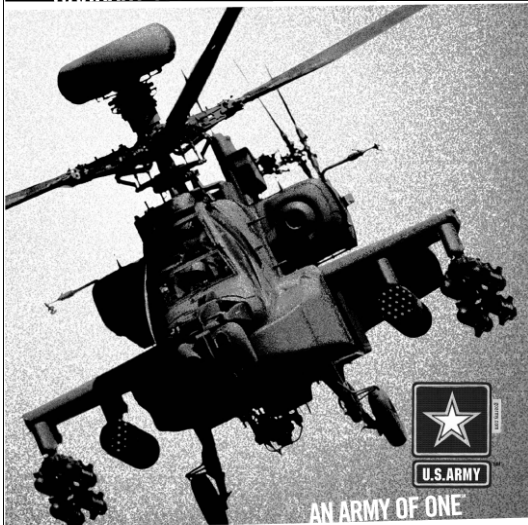
doesn't happen often enough.

"The people who run these parks have to have skateboards in their life to know what we need," says the 15-year-old, who helped start a skateboarding club at his school — and hopes to turn it into a high school sport.

Tubb likes to skate at a park in nearby Plano that includes railings and stairs as well as quarter-pipes and ramps. But he says other parks have surfaces that are too slippery for landing or don't include enough street-skating elements. So he often ends up resorting to a ledge behind a closed grocery store to try new tricks.

But Scott Merritt, a parent in Huntington, N.Y., is just as happy that the new skate park in his city has ramps and bowls. He thinks that style of skating — known as "vert" or "transition" — is safer for his 5-year-old twins, Amanda and Sam, who've recently started skating with beginner equipment — "small skateboards, tons of pads and protective gear."

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FACES 'N' PLACES

Soulful baritone redefines pop

BY WAYNE LEE GAY
Knight Ridder Newspapers

If Josh Groban didn't already exist, it would be necessary to invent him.

"People are tired of hearing singers who don't sing beautifully," says David Romano, Groban's voice teacher. After several decades during which pop stars have most often dressed in torn jeans or mere caricatures of clothing, this clean-cut 23-year-old balladeer comes across, as one critic has commented, like a guy you could take home to meet Mom.

And, in an era in which pop voices have become progressively screechier and scratchier, Groban carefully polishes a naturally attractive, almost operatic quality.

The result of Groban's distinctive appeal has been two mega-selling studio albums, plus arenas filled with female

fans who cheer the lanky, 6-foot baritone as he soars through a repertoire of love songs.

"I've been fascinated by music for as long as I can remember," Groban said in a phone interview. "I was the kid on the playground in the third grade who would tell other kids about Paul Simon or Depeche Mode."

Raised in Southern California by music-loving parents, Groban began to think seriously about a performing career about age 13 or 14, and he enrolled in Los Angeles High School for the Arts.

Groban's talent for singing in a style reminiscent of Frank Sinatra and Mel Tormé came to the fore at a time when the world was ready.

Though his sound harks back to the elegant romanticism of an earlier era, he's a product of a new age of marketing. Most of his rowdier colleagues in the pop-music business sell records based on heavy radio play. And his more distant ancestors in the crooning business built their popularity in movie appearances as matinee idols.

But Groban's booming career has been noted in TV appearances.

He was discovered at age 17, when Brian Avnet, now Groban's Los Angeles-based manager, was scouting entertainment for California Gov. Gray Davis' inauguration in 1999.

Just a few weeks later, when tenor Andrea Bocelli canceled his appearance at the rehearsal for the Grammy Awards, Groban was asked to substitute for him.

Grammy host Rosie O'Donnell was so wowed that she invited him to appear on her show a few weeks later. Knowing that Groban's style wouldn't likely find air time on pop or classical radio, Avnet realized that TV appearances could be the way to reach — or create — Groban's audience.

That hunch was right. Groban appeared on "Oprah" and "20/20," performed in his own PBS special and won the role of a teen-ager who sings at his high school prom on "Ally McBeal."

After every TV appearance, record sales soared, according to Avnet.

"Josh has changed the record business," he says. "Artists like him didn't have a prayer on the radio. Now, radio has come over, and he's getting air time."



Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

Josh Groban, 23, is giving a new look to pop and classical music. Groban's popularity continues to rise with each new album.

Timing her exit

Barbara Walters says she is departing the ABC news magazine show "20/20" after 25 years because she wants to "leave at the top" and avoid being forced out.

"I didn't want anyone to say, she was forced out, she had to leave," she said in New York.

Walters says she plans to stay in television, continuing her interview specials and appearances on "The View." ABC News appointed Elizabeth Vargas to replace her on "20/20."

Walters said television news has changed in recent years, and is going to get worse. "We're going to hear that a woman had a love affair with a frog," she said. "The producers are going to come to me and say: 'Barbara, this woman had a love affair with a frog. Diane Sawyer already has



Walters

the woman lined up. Do you want to do the frog? And I will say, 'OK, but only if I can get the frog and his mother.'"

Golf pro braves Frances

Pro golfer Greg Norman and his wife rode out Hurricane Frances at their estate on Jupiter Island about 90 miles north of Miami.

"We, like everybody else, had a lot of tree damage. I'll probably take me a day and a half to get off the property," Norman told WPTV-TV in West Palm Beach on Saturday.

Norman, known as "The Shark," said he checked out the damage during a lull. When the worst of the storm was blowing through, he said he was in his bedroom.

"It was just like a wall of air started hitting the west side of our building. Everything was rattling, including the storm shutters," he said.

Skelton memorabilia

The widow of comedian Red Skelton donated more than 200

boxes of memorabilia, including costumes and Emmy awards, to a university in Skelton's home town.

Vincennes University in Vincennes, Ind., also bought the home where Skelton was born in 1913, which could be used as part of an effort to build a museum in his honor, said Phillip Summers, former university president.



Skelton

Skelton died in 1997. Volunteers have begun organizing and cataloging items stored in unused university classrooms since last spring. An appraiser will estimate the collection's value in October.

Skelton began entertaining TV audiences in 1951 with characters such as Clem Kadiddlehopper, Freddie the Freeloader and the Mean Middle Kid, whose favorite expression was "I dood it!" He also appeared in more than 30 movies.

Stories and photos from wire services

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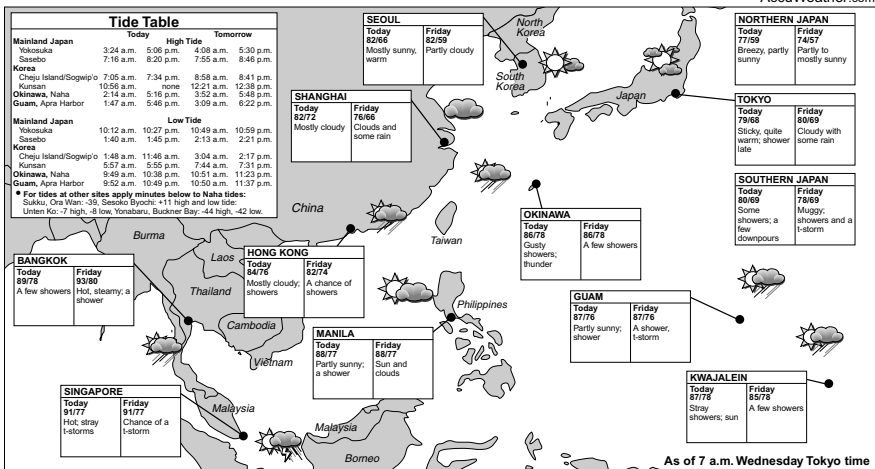
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REGISTRATION PERIOD IS SEPT. 7 - SEPT. 28

The Pacific Forecast

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Extended Forecasts

TOKYO
Saturday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 77, low 66.
Sunday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 77, low 69.

KADENA
Saturday: Showers, high 86, low 78.
Sunday: Partly sunny, high 88, low 80.

SEoul
Saturday: Morning rain, high 73, low 59.
Sunday: Rain, high 79, low 62.

MANILA
Saturday: Showers, high 88, low 76.
Sunday: Showers, high 88, low 77.

HAGATNA
Saturday: Showers, high 87, low 76.
Sunday: Showers, high 89, low 76.

Tuesday's USA Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Albuquerque	84/58	Los Angeles	92/66
Amarillo	82/63	Little Rock	86/60
Anchorage	62/44	Louisville	80/67
Ashville	74/64	Miami	87/75
Baltimore	81/69	Milwaukee	71/52
Birmingham	79/69	Nashville	82/69
Bismarck	69/47	New York	60/70
Boise	85/56	Omaha	77/50
Boston	72/66	Orlando	90/74
Brownsville	92/70	Philadelphia	82/70
Buffalo	81/60	Phoenix	105/83
Burlington	78/60	Pittsburgh	82/66
Charlotte, SC	84/73	Portland, OR	81/57
Charlotte	77/69	Portland, ME	73/63
Cleveland	77/63	Salt Lake City	84/58
Columbus, OH	83/65	St. Louis	80/58
Duluth	64/44	San Antonio	88/61
El Paso	86/59	San Diego	83/68
Hartford	81/64	San Juan	89/76
Helena	75/47	Tampa	87/77
Indianapolis	80/60	Tulsa	87/77
Jacksonville	87/74	Washington	81/69
Kansas City	77/62	Wichita	85/55

Thursday, September 09



U.S. Extended Forecast

The remains of Frances will move into the Laurel Highlands of Pennsylvania and Finger Lakes region of New York on Thursday ahead of a slow-moving cold front. Showers will also spread into New England. A few showers may still linger into the mountains of North Carolina as well. Elsewhere in the nation, the weather will be rather tranquil. The remnants of Frances will quickly move through northern New England on Friday. A few showers will also occur in the Upper Midwest and the Pacific Northwest. On Saturday, the storm system in the Northeast may bring a few showers to Oregon, Washington and Idaho. A few thunderstorms may pop up in Florida and along the Southeast Atlantic coastline.

Thursday's Pacific Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Bangkok	89/78	Iwakuni	79/68
Beijing	83/65	Kadena AB	86/78
Camp Casey	82/63	Kunsan AB	79/67
Christchurch	58/40	Kwajalein	87/78
Diego Garcia	84/74	Manila	88/77
Hagatna	87/76	Misawa AB	79/59
Hanoi	79/69	Osan	87/76
Hong Kong	84/76	Perth	59/37
Honolulu	89/77	Pusan	76/66

Thursday's World Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Acapulco	92/76	Budapest	64/39	Kabul	99/61
Athens	78/57	Buenos Aires	63/46	Kiev	47/31
Auckland	57/46	Cairo	93/62	Oslo	69/56
Baghdad	117/80	Canberra	86/75	London	77/63
Barbados	90/75	Cape Town	71/55	Madrid	83/56
Barcelona	75/63	Geneva	77/62	Mexico City	75/56
Berlin	68/54	Istanbul	64/42	Montreal	69/58
Bermuda	85/73	Jerusalem	87/59	Mogadishu	77/52
Brussels	78/61	Johannesburg	74/46	Moscow	53/36
				Warsaw	56/39



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YOUR MONEY

Students push limits with 'attitude tees'

BY LESLIE EARNEST

Los Angeles Times

It's hard to say who's more likely to mouth off when school convenes this fall: students or their T-shirts.

Statement T-shirts — also known as attitude tees — have caught on with teens outfitting themselves for the classroom: "Too cool for school," boasts a guys' shirt from Urban Outfitters. "I'm not doing homework tonight," warns an Old Navy girls' top.

Plain T-shirts are dull, explained 13-year-old Kassie Quackenbush, in a "surf 85" top as she shopped recently at Gap Inc.'s Old Navy store at Metro Pointe in Costa Mesa, Calif. "When you're walking through the halls, you can read someone's shirt if you're bored," she said, fingering a \$9 turquoise top that cajoled, "Oh bee-have."

Message laden T-shirts aren't new, but they've caught fire this summer, a bright spot in a lackluster retail season.

While overall apparel sales rose 0.2 percent year-over-year through June, the most recent figures available, T-shirts sales jumped 16 percent, said Marshall Cohen, chief industry analyst for NPD Group, a market research firm in West Washington, N.Y. He predicted their sales would grow 20 percent in the back-to-school months of July and August.

The T-shirt's really the statement piece for the season," he

said.

One reason is that as clothing styles have become tamer, with khaki pants and button-down shirts almost as cool for school as they were in the 1980s, the shirts give teens a way to be a little edgy.

If your closet is full of the plaid skirts and crocheted ponchos every other freshman is wearing, you need a few proclamation tees to catch the eye.

"What can you get away with? That's the point," said Christy Glass Love, a managing director at USBX Advisory Services, a Los Angeles-based investment bank. Some get away with a lot, or think they can. Junior high and high school students are snapping up double-entendre tees. "The parents think it's innocent but the kids at school think it's talking about something completely different," said a clerk at Old Navy who declined to give her name.

One Abercrombie & Fitch Co. offering, for example, says, "North Carolina, it's great to be on top." Jay Smith, a 21-year-old clerk at Streetz, a clothing store in Glendale Galleria, in Glendale, Calif., wore one that said, "Big Boys Handymen Service. You'll love what we do with our tools." Meaning? "It's all interpretation," he said.

Most inscriptions are tame. Tilly's sells one for girls that says, "Take a picture! (..." It'll last you longer)," and another that displays the long-winded, "I am never wrong. I'm always right. I thought I was wrong once, but I was wrong."

As for boys, they for the most part continue to align themselves with sports such as surfing, skateboarding and BMX riding by collecting T-shirts bearing Southern California brands such as Volcom and Element.

"It's a message of, 'I belong and this is the kind of stuff I wear,'"



Mark Beckmann, 13, looks at T-shirts with his mother, Ulrike Beckmann, at Old Navy in Santa Monica, Calif.

said Tom Kennedy of Anaheim, Calif.-based Pacific Sunwear of California Inc.'s PacSun division.

Retailers are happy to wield any magnet to pull customers into their stores during the \$40 billion back-to-school season, which accounts for about 4 percent of some stores' annual sales. The season, which begins in mid-July and stretches into September, gives retailers a chance to develop momentum for the crucial holiday shopping season, which accounts for an average of 22 percent of the year's sales.

In a survey last month by the National Retail Federation, retailers said they expected back-to-school sales to rise 7 per-

cent over last year. But there wasn't a stampede as the season began. Sales at stores open at least a year rose a ho-hum 2.6 percent in July.

"This time around a lot of parents will be cutting back a little bit to try to save money," said Kurt Barnard, president of Barnard's Retail Consulting Group, which studies consumer spending patterns.

"The tax refunds have played out, mortgage refinancing has pretty much played out, and all of that together means fewer dollars to go shopping."

T-shirts offer hope partly because they're generally less expensive than other items. In fact, message-bearing tees have become this year's loss leader. They pull in customers who may then buy something more expensive, said Ellen Tolley, spokeswoman for the National Retail Federation.

"A retailer would not be upset if somebody left with a \$15 T-shirt and an \$80 pair of jeans," Tolley said.

Not all graphic tees, as they're known in the industry, are cheap.

At Abercrombie & Fitch, shirts reading, "Some squirrels have all the nuts" and "Trust Me I'm a Doctor," go for \$24.50.

Last month, American Eagle Outfitters launched a promotion giving students who buy jeans with a graphic T-shirt or a hooded sweatshirt a free kit of iron-on letters. "We encourage customers to make a statement of their own," spokeswoman Emily Leon said.

This might not be the best news for schools that have struggled with dress guidelines as students strolled onto campus wearing mini-skirts, precariously low-slung jeans, belly-baring tops and even bedroom slippers. T-shirts would be hard to regulate, the retail association's Tolley said.

"It's not easy for a school to say you can't wear a T-shirt that says one thing but you can wear T-shirts that say another," she said.

"It's so subjective." Schools have become stricter in recent years about what they will and won't accept, said Aubie Goldberg, a retail expert at Ernst & Young's in Los Angeles. And an inappropriately worded T-shirt would probably land on the no-no list.

"As students take liberties," he said, "the schools will push back."

Times staff writer Dawn Wotapka contributed to this report.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Japanese yen (Sept. 7)	120.90
South Korean won (Sept. 6)	1,126.00
British pound	\$1.29
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	\$3.74
British pound	\$1.29
Canada (Dollar)	1.26
Denmark (Krone)	6.10
Egypt (Pound)	2.82
Euro	\$1.20
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.79
Hungary (Forint)	203.75
Indonesia (Rupiah)	1,680.00
Israel (Shekel)	4.5106
Japan (Yen)	110.60
Kuwait (Dinar)	2.947
Norway (Krone)	6.8739
Philippines (Peso)	56.96
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.673
Singapore (Dollar)	1.7943
South Korea (Won)	1,126.00
Switzerland (Franc)	1.2693
Thailand (Baht)	53.76
Turkey (Lira)	1,515.12

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance: Japan, South Korea, Singapore, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For non-currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany, check with your local military banking facility. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in pence, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

New York Merc doc	
Gold	\$490.50
Silver	\$65.53

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.50
Discount rate	2.50
Federal funds market rate	2.50
3-month bill	1.64
30-year bond	5.06

Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America, Bloomberg.com

Cents and Sensibility
Money tip of the day

Opting out of junk mail

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — Junk mail is annoying, and it also can be damaging. The Federal Trade Commission reports that many identity thieves steal mail to search for financial information. Sometimes they even take advantage of those pre-approved credit-card offers.

It's impossible to completely eliminate junk mail. But there are ways to cut back on the number of credit-card, loan and other financial offers you receive.

■ Limit the spread of your financial information. Give out your home address only when absolutely necessary. Don't sign

up for mailing lists, sweepstakes or anything else that may put your contact information up for sale.

■ You also might write "no mailing lists" on anything you send in, such as warranties or rebates. Request that financial institutions and companies you do business with not sell your personal information.

■ Register with both the major organizations offering the chance to opt out of direct mailings from their affiliates.

At www.newdram.org/junk-mail you can, for free, create customized opt-out letters to send to banks, credit card companies and other direct-mail organizations.

THURSDAY EVENING / SEPTEMBER 9, 2004

MOVIES

• **SPORTS**

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Old tree saved

VT BENNINGTON — Vermont engineers have altered the site plan for a proposed Chili's Restaurant to spare a 200-year-old oak tree, according to officials.

The tree was set to come down to make way for the eatery, but planners reconsidered after local residents showed up to protest.

All work has been halted at the construction site while Chili's prepares an Act 250 application. District Environmental Coordinator Warren Foster confirmed that Chili's has come up with a plan to save the oak, said Dan Monks, the town planning director and zoning administrator.

Students kicked out

VA NORFOLK — More than one-fifth of Norfolk State University students were kicked out of classes because they hadn't yet paid last year's tuition or made plans to pay this year's bills.

University officials say the new policy, which affected more than 1,400 students, is standard at colleges and is in response to NSU failing to collect \$6.8 million in tuition revenue.

A line of roughly 100 students snaked around the first floor of the administration building waiting to square away their accounts with a cashier. Administrators said the students had been warned of the policy, which was disputed by several students.

"We were never notified that we had to pay by September," said Ashley Moore, a freshman. "They let us sign up for classes, and then they kicked us out of classes."

Hi-tech stalker

CA GLENDALE — California police arrested a man they said tracked his ex-girlfriend's whereabouts by attaching a global positioning system to her car.

Ara Gabrielyan, 32, was arrested Aug. 29 on one count of stalking and three counts of making criminal threats. He was being held on \$500,000 bail and was to be arraigned Wednesday.

"This is what I would consider stalking of the 21st century," police Lt. Jon Perkins said.

Police said Gabrielyan tracked the 35-year-old woman, who was not identified, after she ended their relationship, showing up unexpectedly at a book store, an airport and dozens of other places where she was.

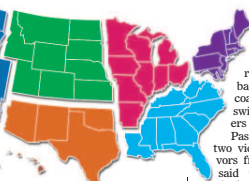
Police said Gabrielyan attached a cellular phone to the woman's car on Aug. 16 with a motion switch that turned on when the car moved, transmitting a signal each minute to a satellite.

Information was then sent to a Web site that allowed Gabrielyan to monitor the woman's location.

Firefighter dead

NJ NEW BRUNSWICK — A New Jersey deputy fire chief died after rushing alone into a burning home and alerting residents to evacuate, officials said.

James D'Heron, wearing no protective or breathing gear, was found on a second-floor landing by fellow firefighters, Mayor James Cahill said. He had been the first



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

firefighter on the scene, driving six blocks from the station.

D'Heron, 51, was pronounced dead at the scene. Thirteen adults and two children escaped safely; no others were hurt.

D'Heron had received three citations for heroism during his 24-year career, the mayor said. "So you can see that today was typical," he said.

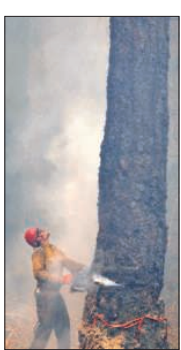
Salvaging tourist season

OH TOLEDO — Businesses are cutting rates and handing out restaurant coupons to lure visitors back to South Bass Island, the resort in Lake Erie where hundreds of visitors have been stricken by an unidentified gastrointestinal illness.

Since the outbreak peaked, in early August, the number of tourists visiting the island has been dropping.

"People are kind of treating us like we have the plague," said June Stoiber, who owns two taverns and a gift shop in Put-in-Bay, the island's village.

The island normally draws about 500,000 people annually to its inns, wineries, beaches and bars. Most come in July and August, but there is still time to save what's left of the tourist season, said Tom Brady, a media consultant working with village businesses.



Timber!

John Kimble, with the Beckworth handcrew from the Plumas National Forest, cuts down a fire-damaged tree along Pine Flat Road in Santa Rosa, Calif., to prevent it from falling and blocking the road.

2 drown in bay

AK JUNEAU — Two people drowned after their recreational boat sank in a bay off Alaska's southern coast and they tried to swim for shore, state troopers said.

Passing boats pulled the two victims and three survivors from Resurrection Bay, said trooper Sgt. Brandon Anderson.

Strong wind had made for rough water in the bay and the nearby Gulf of Alaska. Survivors told police they were fishing when their 22-foot boat was swamped by waves crashing over the stern. They could not start the engine.

A distress call was placed on a channel not monitored by the Coast Guard, Anderson said. The crew of another boat heard the call and notified a rescue coordination center in Juneau.

Another one for records

TN HAMPTON — A Tennessee man beat his own record for staying underwater with scuba gear after five days in a lake — complete with recliner, a checkerboard, music and good friends to keep him company.

Then Jerry Hall cheerfully signed a pledge to his wife never to do it again.

"I had the easy job," Hall said. "It was my dive team that did all the work. I kept them hopping all the time, and they never once complained. Whatever I wanted or needed, they were there for me."

Hall, 39, of Bluff City, Tenn., already is in the current edition of the Guinness World Book of Records for staying underwater with scuba gear for 71 hours, 39 minutes and 40 seconds.

He surpassed that and didn't leave eastern Tennessee's Watauga Lake until he hit a record time of 120 hours, 1 minute and 25 seconds.

Misleading name

MI HAMBURG TOWNSHIP — Gary Baja is surprised by some of the people who have checked out his new restaurant, C.R. Smokin' Chickens.

The carryout, scheduled to open in a couple weeks, will sell flame-roasted rotisserie-smoked chicken. But some people haven't gotten the message yet.

"We had two girls, according to builders, pull in wanting to fill out applications to be dancers," Baja said. "We've had two groups of cars coming in with all males dressed very nicely, thinking it was a strip club ..."

115 dogs rescued

TX HONEY GROVE — About 115 neglected dogs were recovered Thursday from inside a 1,400-square-foot home in North Texas.

The malnourished animals, most of which were Chihuahuas, were placed with the SPCA of Texas. The dogs will be examined and eventually put up for adoption.

Officials with the Fannin County Sheriff's Department visited the property last week. They found more than 100 dogs living in a home where trash was stacked several feet high.



Friendly faces

Two raccoon dog pups, and a third unseen pup, members of the canine family who are native to inland China, huddle together at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Neb.



Having a baaad day

Spectators react as things go wrong for some of the sheep running through Reed Point, Mont., during The Great Montana Sheep Drive.

Beautiful view
Texas.

A colorful sunset silhouettes the Ferris wheel at the Red River Valley Fair in Paris, Texas.



Double the effort

Enjoying the final days of summer, twins Townsend and Sarah Morey, 5, work on their kayaking skills at their grandmother's home along the channel that connects Lake Winona and Lake Waukegan in Center Harbor, N.H.



Graceful flight

A great blue heron in the Laguna Madre was seen early morning from the Bayside Loop at Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas.



Straight and narrow

Derek Discoll, of Summer, Maine, paints the white lines on the newly resurfaced tennis courts at Lewiston High School in Lewiston, Maine.

Crane comeback

LA NEW ORLEANS — After nearly 30 years, the Audubon Zoo's signature bird is back on display in New Orleans.

For now, the whooping cranes wade, strut and sometimes run — their black-tipped wings curved wide — in the zoo's Asian Domain, across from the white tigers. Permanent quarters for the world's rarest crane — only 430 adults exist — are still under construction near the entrance.

Sometime during the American Zoo Association meeting here Sept. 18-22, the Audubon Institute will open the new exhibit, which has a wide, shallow pond in front and a grassy area across the back.

The enclosure for the two 5-foot-tall birds is about 50 feet to a side.

Wild this and herons are likely to fly in. "But cranes are fairly aggressive birds at times," Maloney said. "Depending on their mood, they may decide they don't want a lot of interlopers."

Raid on a gamble

NH DERRY — New Hampshire police raided two private clubs suspected of illegal gambling, seizing nine video poker machines and more than \$12,000 in cash.

Police said they had been investigating the Eagles and Halcyon clubs for three years. One person was arrested for having marijuana and police say they expect more arrests.

The machines are legal for entertainment, as long as they don't pay out cash.

Possible serial killer

MO KANSAS CITY — Five decomposing bodies have been found in one Kansas City neighborhood in just three days, and police were investigating whether a single killer was responsible.

Calls to 911 pointed police to two bodies in vacant lots east of downtown Kansas City, officials said. It was the same area as the three other bodies days earlier.

"I can't remember anything like this," said police Capt. Rich Lockhart.

Despite the similarities, police said it wasn't immediately clear whether the crimes were connected.

"Forensically, we have not connected these, but we're investigating them as though they are," said Lockhart.

Baby found after attack

MD DISTRICT HEIGHTS — Maryland authorities searched for a man who knocked a woman unconscious and made off with her car and baby. The child was later found safely.

The suspect hit the mother in the head while she was stopped at an Exxon gas station in District Heights shortly before 5 a.m., Prince George's County police said.

Police later found the woman's sports utility vehicle at another Exxon station several miles away in Fairfax County with the engine running, minus turned up and the infant unattended in the back. The 10-month-old girl was unharmed, police said.

Police had responded to a call of another stolen car at the second Exxon station when they found the SUV with the baby inside.

Police are investigating whether the crimes are related.

Rare falcon flies coop

MA BOSTON — The rare red-footed falcon that set birders' hearts aflutter with its western hemisphere debut has apparently left.

The celebrated raptor, which drew flocks of birders to Martha's Vineyard, has not been seen for days, said Gus Ben David, director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Felix Neck Wildlife Sanctuary.

"Where he is now, we don't know," Ben David said.

Simon Perkins, field ornithologist with the Massachusetts Audubon Society, said that the chances of this falcon being spotted again are "slim to none."

Local birdwatcher Vernon Laux spotted the year-old male raptor on Aug. 8 flying near the Katama Airfield in Edgartown. It was the first documented sighting of a red-footed falcon in the western hemisphere generating excitement throughout the birding world.

DNA evidence review

VA RICHMOND — Gov. Mark R. Warner is reviewing a proposal to test random samples of old DNA evidence from thousands of crime scenes after genetic tests exonerated a man who had served 22 years in prison for two rapes, the third such reversal in Virginia. Arthur Lee Whitfield was released Aug. 23, the third Virginia inmate exonerated since 2001 based on evidence discovered in the files of a former state lab analyst, Mary Jane Burton. The two other men freed through DNA evidence saved by Burton had served a combined 36 years; they received state restitution of more than \$1 million each.

Burton, who died in 1999, worked in the lab from 1974 to 1988 and saved copious amounts of DNA evidence even before the genetic fingerprint became a staple of law enforcement and the courts.

Since then, Virginia has amassed one of the nation's largest DNA databases and has been a leader nationally in the use of DNA evidence in criminal prosecutions.

WWII plane crash

TX CORSICANA — A vintage World War II plane crashed in a pasture shortly after it took off Saturday, killing two men, authorities said.

Witnesses Jeff Horn and his wife, Dora, told the Corsicana Daily Sun that the 1943 Fairchild PT26 had just taken off from the Corsicana Municipal Airport when the engine stalled, sending the plane crashing to the ground.

Passenger Robert Burleson of Corsicana was killed. The pilot, Cliff McCluney of Kears, died later at a hospital. Authorities said both men were in their 60s.

The Federal Aviation Administration, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the local sheriff's department were investigating.

Corsicana is about 50 miles south of Dallas.

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Don't stand in U.S.'s way

This is in response to the Sept. 1 letter "Listening to our allies." In the 1980s, the United States, like Europe, saw Iraq as a stable, pro-western country. In the 1990s, Iraq was a pariah state led by an unstable dictator.

Saddam Hussein's monetary and moral support to Palestinian suicide bombers, funding of anti-western terrorists, massacres of its Shia and Kurdish populations and 10 years of ignoring U.N. Security Council mandates made the decision to remove Saddam morally correct.

The attack on Sept. 11, 2001, and the inroads of al-Qaida terrorists into Saudi Arabia, the removal of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia and the neutralization of Saddam — who they were there to defend against — strategically required.

The American people have had just enough of France and Germany who have under-estimated from sending troops and equipment in support of the invasion. But when they took an active role in countering the enforcement of the U.N. mandate, and thereby undermining the legitimacy of the United Nations, they became political adversaries.

America has diverse views on the war, and never accepted the use of its allies to support us unquestioningly.

However, the lack of interest in freeing an oppressed country was a shock, especially coming from countries, which the United States had spent thousands of its soldiers' lives and billions of its dollars in aiding in freeing them from tyranny. The families of our soldiers would disagree that supporting a war from 6,000 miles away is easy.

All we ask is, when our country is doing the hard right that others cannot bring the political will to attempt, that your country quietly stand out of the way.

Maj. Andrew Green
Baghdad

Church doesn't deserve blame

As an Army dietitian and Catholic Sunday school teacher, I was doubly concerned about 8-year-old Haley Waldman ("Hale's life keeps girl from first Communion," article, Aug. 22), a victim of congenital cardiac disease.

This condition prevents people from consuming the wheat protein gluten, which damages the small intestine. Haley received a gluten-free communion wafer made instead of wheat at her first Holy Communion by a priest against the advice of his local bishop.

That Haley's mother is now upset that the Church refuses to validate the rite over the use of rice over wheat as prescribed by Catholic doctrine is moot, given that she herself refused the bishop's offer to serve her daughter sacramental wine alone instead of both wine and bread.

According to Catholic doctrine, sacramental wine is enough to transmit grace to the receiver, just as with sacramental bread alone. Gluten may be harmful for Haley, but a single sip of wine poses no health risks, and may even foster a healthy attitude toward alcohol.

Therefore, it is not the Catholic Church that is imposing some legalistic understand-

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to the National Center for Victims of Crime): In the United States one murder is committed every 32 minutes, or that a violent crime is committed every 7 seconds.

What this shows is that not only does our superior sensitivity not affect the level of violence we tolerate, but that more day-to-day deaths have taken place unnoticed by the public in the United States than the members killed in this war, in spite of the daunting tasks of overthrowing a dictator's regime and trying to support and stabilize a new government.

The idea that standing up for those who can't stand up for themselves, or ensuring the continued prosperity of our country, has produced no positive results ironically takes for granted the writer's First Amendment right to say such foolishness — which was secured through war.

The author is right when he states that, "We are not looking for conquest in a good fight."

What he misses, though, is that we are looking for victory in the good fight against terrorism. Because of this, our country will do nothing less than degrade and erode the freedoms that we hold so dear.

Now I'm not advocating war simply for war's sake. But what it comes down to is this: You can't hide your head when someone comes into your house and hope they won't find you.

We must reach the resolve that was felt on Sept. 11, 2001, and continue to stand for those who can't. So that in the future, none of our children will have to continue to fight against an enemy that doesn't have any sympathy.

James Lewis
Stuttgart, Germany

Strong leadership?

What an "Alice in Wonderland" country we live in, where — if you have a combat record, served your country honorably and sustained wounds/received medals to prove it (as did John Kerry, Mac Cleland and John McCain) — you are subject to dirty tricks and a political smear campaign spearheaded by those who claim to hold "unity," "family values" and "love of country" in high esteem.

Conversely, you are considered a "strong leader" if you chose not to serve when called upon and have no war record, but rather opted for the "campaign tour," missing a year of duty in the Air National Guard during a time of war, as did President Bush.

Vice President Dick Cheney's five deferments during the Vietnam War (his "expectant parent" deferment having been created especially for him) are likewise considered "strong leadership" traits, as are the deferments of Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, John Ashcroft, Saxby "bad knee" Chambliss, Tom Delay, Karl Rove and Rush Limbaugh.

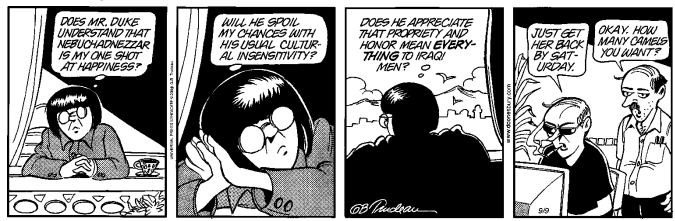
But oh, how they love to bang the "bring 'em on" war drums, as long as somebody does the fighting.

Does America wish to imply that it's better not to serve at all? If so, then something is terribly wrong. Let's follow our definition: courage, leadership and commitment to our country.

Edwin Thornburg
Wichburg, Germany

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Doonesbury Flashbacks



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OPINION

Vietnam's campaign role: Test recognition

BY JEFFREY H. SMITH

The attacks on John Kerry by Swift Boat Veterans for Truth have struck a raw nerve in many Americans, particularly among veterans of the Vietnam War. To be sure, if John Kerry lied about his wounds or lacked courage under fire it would be a legitimate issue in the campaign. But the central charges have largely been discredited by the Navy's records and by serious reporting in the mainstream media.

It is regrettable that this criticism persists. But it is even more regrettable that has focused the nation on events of long ago rather than how the candidates would handle the future, particularly the war against terrorism. Kerry has called on President Bush to repudiate these lies. He should.

But Kerry, who first criticized the Vietnam War in 1971, should also ask a more relevant question. What was the view of Air Force National Guard Lt. George W. Bush on the Vietnam War in 1971? Did he, like Navy Lt. John F. Kerry, realize it was a folly? Did he have the wisdom and foresight to understand that the United States had gotten itself in a terrible quagmire and lacked the fortitude and leadership to get out without further useless loss of life? What is the record of the young George Bush's view of Vietnam?

We got into Vietnam for reasons that were thought to be both strategic and noble. But it didn't take long to recognize the terrible misjudgment we had made. A former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has recently written that "we could have ended the war as early as 1962, and not later than 1967, without any significant loss in our strategic position." A young Kerry recognized that in 1971. Did a young Bush?

It was the rigid thoughtlessness of the Johnson and Nixon administrations that kept us in Vietnam and kept us from finding a way out. The rigid thoughtlessness of the Bush administration risks a similar tragedy in Iraq. We have gotten rid of Saddam Hussein, a great achievement. But we did not find weapons of mass destruction, and we have generated a deep and pervasive hatred of the United States that will take generations to overcome. That makes us less safe, not more. Kerry recognizes that. Does Bush?

It is understandable that veterans of the Vietnam War are angry at people who criticized the war. After all, they lost best friends and cannot accept the idea that their deaths may have been in vain. I was angered at the time by Kerry's allegations of widespread war crimes by American forces, remarks the senator has recently acknowledged were "over the top." But the returning veterans who spoke out against the war were not, for the most part, criticizing their fellow soldiers. They were ... raising their voices to point out the madness of our policy. It takes a special courage to speak out against a cause for which you were once prepared to die — a cause that, as a combat leader, you asked others to be prepared to die for. Kerry has that kind of courage. Does Bush?

I did not serve in Vietnam, but hardly a day passes when I don't think about my 33 West Point classmates killed there. One classmate, Wes Clark, used his Vietnam experiences to shape his thinking and a career that culminated when, as supreme allied commander in Europe, he led NATO forces to victory in the Balkan war. Clark learned the right lessons of Vietnam. Has Bush?

A true test of any president should be whether he can recognize a failing policy and has the moral courage to change course.



Bush has not demonstrated that he understands the magnitude of the errors he made in getting us into Iraq. Even some leading Republicans have said the war was a mistake. Does Bush recognize that?

The debates of 1971 have echoes in our current one. We have gotten deeply involved in a region that we do not understand, and we have unleashed forces we cannot control. We must have a president who can recognize our strengths and our shortcomings, who will ask hard questions and who will challenge agenda, even intelligence information that is presented to him.

In 1971 Kerry recognized that we needed to change our policy. In 2004 he recognizes

the need to change our policy. That is the issue. Who is better equipped to lead us: Bush, who rigidly insists that he is right, or Kerry, who has charted a new direction?

In his powerful farewell to the Corps of Cadets at West Point in May 1962, Gen. Douglas MacArthur said, "The soldier above all other people prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

Those wounds and scars can teach a lot. We must learn from them, and we should elect a president who has also learned from them.

Jeffrey H. Smith served as CIA general counsel from 1995 to 1996. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

Kerry's use of past service won't hide current flaws

After locking up the Democratic nomination in the primaries in the spring, John Kerry took a snowboarding vacation in Idaho. In a run down the mountain, he fell. A reporter

Jack Kelly

joined him about it. "I don't fall," Kerry snapped. Pointing to a Secret Service agent nearby, Kerry said: "That [expletive deleted] knocked me down."

"Sen. John Kerry is angry at the way his campaign has botched the attacks from the Swift boat veterans and ordered a staff shake up that will put former Clinton aides in

top positions," reported the New York Daily News.

The advice Kerry's senior aides gave him was that he should leave response to the Swifties to surrogates, because Kerry's friends in the major media would do their best to bury the story.

This didn't work, because the story the Swifties wanted to tell got out anyway, through talk radio and dozens of Web logs. But it was good that the Swifties didn't really take off in terms of public consciousness until after Kerry went postal on Clinton.

Kerry is taking aboard former Clinton aides Joe Lockhart and Joel Johnson, experts at maligning the women who said Bill Clinton had forced his attentions on them. But efforts to mau-mau the Swifties just keeps the Swifties in the news.

Some Democrats have urged that Kerry assault (again) Bush's service in the Texas Air National Guard. But this wouldn't answer questions about Kerry's service, and

most Americans are more interested in fighting the war on terror than in re-fighting a war that ended badly three decades ago.

In spring 2003, when I thought Kerry was the hero he claimed to be, I still thought he was likely to be the weakest of the Democratic candidates in a general election, because he is a poor campaigner, and because his record after three terms in the Senate was both lackluster and decidedly left of center, especially on national security issues.

Kerry was using his war service as insulation against attacks on his voting record. (How dare you criticize my votes on defense. I served in Vietnam! How dare you bring up my flip-flops on Iraq. I served in Vietnam!) But thanks to the Swifties, that insulation has been stripped away.

No senator has been elected president since John F. Kennedy in 1960. This is in

large part because there are all those votes in the Congressional Record for opposition researchers to sift through.

GOP consultant Rich Galen thinks there is another reason. Senators have small staffs and no real responsibilities. They do not know how to manage and to delegate. Galen thinks Kerry's already-top-heavy staff will become more so with the addition of the Clinton people, making decision-making even more sluggish and chaotic.

There is also a question of loyalty. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's best shot at being president would come in 2008, at the end of a second Bush term. No staff shake-up can cure the fundamental problem, which is Kerry himself.

His aides could not have known whether, or how much, Kerry had embellished his Vietnam service, and it was he more than

they who chose to make his 4½ months in Vietnam 35 years ago the central rationale for his candidacy for president.

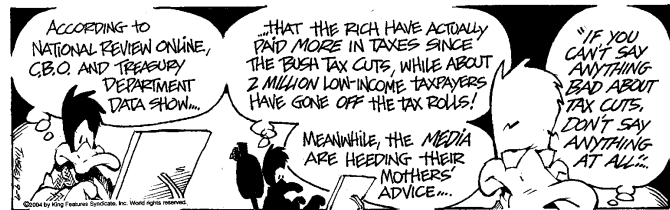
Kerry had to know that he had mightily peeved his shipmates when, in 1971, he accused Vietnam veterans of routinely committing war crimes. It's astounding that he gave no thought earlier to damage control.

The Swifties have said they will fold their tent if he apologizes, and authorizes release of all of his military records. Kerry had an opportunity to do this at the American League convention Sept. 1. But he let the opportunity go by. John Kerry never falls. Everything is always someone else's fault.

Jack Kelly is the national affairs writer for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Toledo (Ohio) Blade. A former Marine and Green Beret, he was a deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force in the Reagan administration. His column appears weekly in Stars and Stripes.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Horoscope

The Cancer moon brings focus to how we feel about our environment. You'll be able to put your finger on something that's been bugging you for days. Once problems are identified, they are easily remedied. With love planet Venus in Leo, a secret crush is hard to keep quiet. Even if your lips are sealed, someone observant will find out.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (September 9). Your love life comes into clear focus in the next three weeks, and you'll know exactly what you want. Go for it—you're super attractive. Educational ventures are positive life-changing forces in the next six months. Big money in December helps you start a business. Scorpio and Pisces advise, but marriage may be to a Aquarius.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Originality is where it's at. Don't worry about fitting in. Instead, focus your efforts on selling your most unique talents. At work, you can expect a clash of personalities, but with a diplomatic touch, you will prevail.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The most powerful beliefs you hold are probably centered around your identity. You're in an experimental phase now, so the need to remain consistent is not as strong as usual.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). What stands in your way is only an illusion. Willpower and hard work pay off eventually. For now, keep moving regardless of immediate results. Attend business seminars; you'll meet all the right people.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's easy to capture and hold someone's attention if that person thinks you have a burning secret, so don't feel you must voice everything. Saying what is on your mind doesn't always bring happy results. Be discerning.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're busy making commitments, proving your loyalty and giving selflessly. But take care of yourself, too—first, if you dare! Relay your needs, and

you'll be amazed at how they are met. Asking more of others is healthy.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Brighten people's spirits, or create a more harmonious environment, and you'll do well. Make calls, get packages off, fax, and file. The more organized you are, the easier it will be to notice anything you missed earlier.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You've still got much to learn in order to make a goal happen. Instead of being content with what you already know, close the gap in your knowledge by doing homework, research or planning.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Apparently random events are falling into a pattern. Is it you? Could it be? Well, of course, it is. Home in on the particular thing you do to create this trend. On a romantic note, you can't afford not to take risks today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The team needs a leader, and you're it. Friends flock to your side when you show true devotion to a cause. You've the gift of gab, and that helps loosen people up, sway them to your side and then motivate them to action.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's more than what you're reading on the surface. Become an expert at subconscious communication, and you'll always know who is lying. You can afford to be more generous with your attention.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You prefer to make people feel good, and that's part of your charm—you live by the rule, if you can say something nice, don't say anything at all. However, today, what your friends really want from you is the truth.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You've got the sharp mind-set that can push any situation to your favor. Just don't act impulsively; patience will help you focus. Try new projects, and you'll meet people who'll help you find what you're looking for.

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Joyce Jillson



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



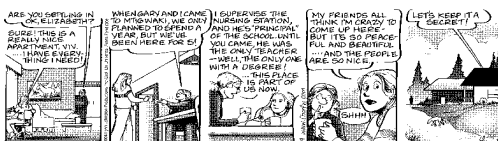
Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



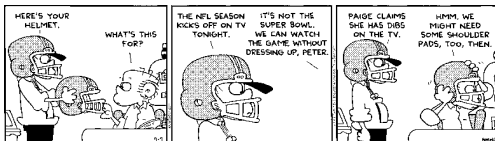
Better or Worse



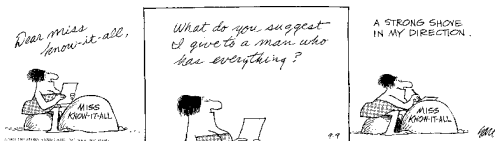
Peanuts



Fox trot



B.C.



Baby Bites



Spider Man



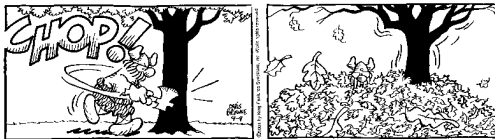
Blondie



Dilbert



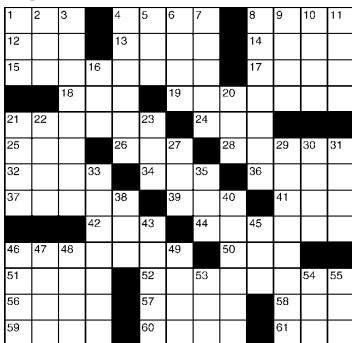
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Unknown ordinal
4 Apprehends
8 Sticky horses
12 Perfume-label word
13 Russian river
14 Earthenware pot
15 Lack of boldness
17 Lahr portrayal
18 B&B
19 Socrates' final quaff
21 Stiletto
24 Sara of "Less Than Perfect"
25 Chartres chum
26 Crucial
28 Picture transfer
32 Rerches
34 "Strangelove" subject
36 Unadorned
37 Fashion
39 Chic, to Austin Powers
41 Zero-star review
42 Pack away
44 Casual pants
46 Upper arm bone
50 Turf
51 On
52 Smoothness of motion
56 Kiehl's path
57 "Sixteen —"
58 Excessively
59 Son of Odin

- 60 "M*A*S*H" cast member
61 Longing

Down

- 1 Bottom line
2 Skater Babilonia
3 Summer forecast stat
4 Bore
5 Onassis, familiarly
6 Financial setback
7 More crafty
8 Irish girl
9 Hodgepodge
10 United nations
11 Founded
16 Squid squirt
20 Pie ingredient?
21 Low voice
22 Leave out
23 Just out
27 Sweet potato
29 Greet
30 Leading man
31 Monocle part
33 Woody Allen movie
35 Scepter
38 Listening device
40 Skop
43 Medford, Mass. university
45 Wooden shoe passenger
46 Sentry's call
47 Beehive State
48 California lake
49 Lento
53 One (Pref.)
54 Placekicker's pride
55 Over there

Answer to Previous Puzzle



9-9

CRYPTOQUIP

ECVXELPR DP DJJCEZO
SDLKXN MDO OXPZ
PXSMLPR QNXPR, QXCKO

MZ VKZDS LPPXJZPS?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NOT ABOUT TO WASTE MORE MARGARINE, I SWORE I WOULD HANG ON UNTIL THE BUTTER END.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals N

Hambrick more congenial backing up Smith this time

By BOB BAUM

The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — Troy Hambrick is playing behind Emmitt Smith again, but this time he's not complaining.

"I've got a big heart for Emmitt," Hambrick said after an Arizona Cardinals workout, "and every day I get a chance to apologize to him for the things I said when I was younger and hungrier and thought that was the thing to do. It was immaturity."

The Cardinals traded an undisclosed conditional 2005 draft pick to Oakland last week to acquire Hambrick and defensive end Peppé Zellner. With new Arizona coach Dennis Green firmly committed to the 35-year-old Smith as the starting running back, a wiser Hambrick said he will play whatever role the Cardinals desire.

"They traded for me, so they needed me," Hambrick said. "I come in a little out of shape, but I'm pressing along trying to fit into this offense some kind of way. If my role is limited, I'll take it. If it's full of excitement, I'll take that."

With Marcell Shipp gone with a

"Every day I get a chance to apologize to [Emmitt Smith] for the things I said when I was younger and hungrier and thought that was the thing to do. It was immaturity."

Troy Hambrick
Cardinals running back

season-ending leg injury, Hambrick becomes the power back to complement Smith's finesse style.

"It was a good combination in Dallas until I opened my mouth," Hambrick said Sunday. "I'm going to try to keep that closed this year, and in the years to come."

Just two seasons ago, when Smith was still with Dallas and be-

came the NFL's career rushing leader, Hambrick was impatient with his backup role, and said so.

At training camp in 2002, when Smith was just 540 yards shy of the record, Hambrick called himself the best running back on the team. After Smith broke the record, Hambrick hinted it was time for him to move on.

"I have always admired Emmitt and his will and the things he's done," Hambrick said back then. "I just feel like it comes a time — it's not my call to say when it's time — but I'm a guy that wants to get my career off the ground and establish myself as a household name."

Hambrick got his wish in 2003 and his attitude was still the same when the season started.

"This is my time," he said. "We've been waiting on Emmitt to retire or make his move. . . Of course, I see it as a breakout year. Every time I touch the ball, it's a breakout carry."

What followed was a lesson in humility. He started all 16 games for Dallas last season and gained 927 yards, but averaged just 3.5 yards per carry.

"It was just my desire to play



Emmitt Smith (22) is entrenched as the Cardinals' starting running back, playing ahead of recently acquired Troy Hambrick.

the game," Hambrick now says of his big talk. "I was hearing from everybody that I was the next thing to O.J. Simpson. But they didn't tell me that once a team starts game-planning against you, all those big runs stop."

The Cowboys drafted Julius Jones this year, then released Hambrick in May. He was signed by Oakland, but spent more time eating than playing with the Raiders in the preseason.

"Not doing much there in Oak-

land, I gained maybe 10 or 12 pounds," Hambrick said. "I want to get down to 250. I'm about 260 now and I feel it."

Smith said he harbors no bad feelings toward Hambrick.

"That's all water under the bridge to me," Smith said. "He had his opportunity to do what he needed to do. I don't think it had anything to do with me personally. He wanted to play. I understand that. He just handled it in a very immature way, which he's recognized."

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STERLING MEDICAL

Brees, Fiedler start campers

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — For a guy who figuratively got thrown under the bus by his own organization, Drew Brees emerged without a scratch.

Brees kept his job as starting quarterback of the San Diego Chargers on Monday, a move that was expected after he followed last season's miserable performance with a solid exhibition season.

Doug Flutie, 41, who accounted for half of the Chargers' four wins last year, will be the backup. Philip Rivers, the fourth pick in April's draft who missed 29 practices during a contract holdout, will be the third-stringer. The Chargers also will carry Cleo Lemon on the active roster.

"It doesn't really change anything for me," said Brees, who's 4-16 in his past 20 starts. "There's still a lot of work ahead, and that's what I'm focused on."

The Chargers open at Houston on Sunday.

Brees has been steady in four exhibition games, two of which the Chargers won. The Chargers' opening day starter the past two years, he completed 31 of 45 passes (69 percent) for 432 yards and three touchdowns, with two interceptions this summer. In 15 series, he directed the Chargers to five touch-downs and a field goal.

Last year, Brees was benched for five games and yanked from two others. He completed only 205 of 356 passes (57.6 percent), with 11 touchdowns and 15 interceptions.

"I fully expect, barring injury, that he'll be our quarterback," coach Marty Schottenheimer said. "What I saw was a young man who had a rough year last year, and as we all know, if you're not successful, it all begins with the quarterback," he said. "He came back with a renewed purpose and I think what has happened is he's gained more experience from last year, and I think that has served him well as we move into this year."

Fiedler heads out Feeley as Dolphins' QB for now

DAVIE, Fla. — Jay Fiedler was named Miami's starting quarterback for the fifth consecutive Sunday, beating out A.J. Feeley after a six-month competition.

But coach Dave Wannstedt stressed that Fiedler was effective only for Sunday's season opener against Tennessee.

Fiedler completed 20 of 33 passes for 199 yards with one touchdown and no interceptions during the preseason. Feeley went 23-for-41 for 244 yards with two touchdowns and one interception.

The 32-year-old Fiedler previously beat back challenges from Brian Griese and Dan Fouts. But the Dolphins clearly want Feeley to be their quarterback of the future.

They traded a second-round draft pick in

NFL briefs

March for Feeley, who had been Philadelphia's third-string quarterback. Then they signed him to a five-year deal worth \$21.6 million.

The team also gave Fiedler permission to pursue a trade. He briefly tested the market, then agreed to a restructured contract with the Dolphins that eliminated a \$2 million bonus he was due to collect in April.

Fiedler has never been a popular figure with fans in Miami even though he is 35-17 in four seasons as a starter.

Vikings sign Morten Andersen

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Morten Andersen, the second-leading scorer in NFL history, signed with the Minnesota Vikings on Tuesday, two days after being cut by Kansas City.

The Vikings released Brett Von Steuben, who lasted just a week as the replacement for Aaron Elling. The Vikings cut Elling, a second-year player, after he struggled in the preseason.

Andersen, 44, is in his 23rd season. His 2,259 career points trail only Gary Anderson, another former Vikings kicker (2,346).

He lost the Chiefs' job to Lawrence Tynes, who played the past two seasons in the Canadian Football League. Last season Andersen hit 16 of 20 field goals and 58 of 59 extra points.

Browns' Suggs misses practice

BEREA, Ohio — Browns running back Lee Suggs did not practice Monday, raising doubt about his availability for the season opener against the Baltimore Ravens.

Suggs, who sat out Saturday's preseason finale against the Chicago Bears with a "stinger," had little time in the locker room following practice.

"It feels good," Suggs whispered.

Asked if he would play in Sunday's opener, Suggs said, "It's not up to me."

Coach Butch Davis steered clear of talking about Suggs, who rushed for a team-high 118 yards in 15 carries and scored three touchdowns during the exhibition season.

"He's day to day," Davis said.

Based on his play during training camp and in three preseason games, Suggs appeared to win the competition with William Green to be the Browns' No. 1 back.

Crumpler, Price unable to practice

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — Alge Crumpler and Peerce Price joined an injury list that already included Warrick Dunn and Keith Brooking for the Atlanta Falcons.

All four starters missed practice Monday afternoon, but each expects to be ready when Atlanta opens the season Sunday at San Francisco.

"It's nothing that seems serious at this time," coach Jim Mora said. "We don't have to file anything officially with the league yet, so I'd say they're questionable at the very best."

Crumpler, a Pro Bowl tight end, has a tight hamstring. Price, who will start his first game at flanker since the Falcons acquired him from Buffalo 1½ years ago, skipped the workout because of a sore groin that's bothered him since last week.

Price added he had negative results from an X-ray on his neck two weeks ago. He had an X-ray last week that gave negative results on his left hand.

Dunn, who played just one series last week at Washington, is still suffering stiffness from an upper right leg strain that made him leave the preseason game against Cincinnati on Aug. 27.

Chiefs' Morton probable for Denver

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Wide receiver Johnnie Morton practiced Monday for the first time since July and could be ready for Kansas City's season opener at Denver.

It would be a huge lift for the Chiefs' injury-depleted receiver corps if Morton can overcome his sore Achilles' tendon and contribute.

Wide receiver Marc Boerigter, who had an impressive camp, went on injured reserve last week after knee surgery.

"It's not going to get any better unless I take a long layoff," said Morton, who had 50 catches last year for 740 yards and four touchdowns. "I got to where I could play well and deal with the pain."

League renews TV agreements in Japan

NEW YORK — The NFL has renewed its television agreements with three Japanese networks on the eve of the 2004 season.

The league announced deals with NHK, NTV and Gaora starting on Thursday, when Indianapolis is at New England.

NFL will continue to broadcast ABC's "Monday Night Football" and has exclusive pay television and high-definition rights to carry the Super Bowl live.

Two games per week will be aired on NHK-BS, which is available in 13 million homes, and one game each week on NHK Hi-Vision, the network's 24-hour high definition.

NFL Network, which has been affiliated with the NFL since 1989, also will show "NFL Weekly," a 30-minute recap of the week's games, and incorporate material from the NFL Network and NFL Films into existing shows.

Gaora, a satellite sports channel, will broadcast up to six games per week. The network will continue to produce its own 30-minute, bi-weekly NFL-themed show, NTV, which reaches 44 million homes, will continue to produce its weekly 30-minute show, "NFL Club."

RB Staley chosen to start for Steelers

By ALAN ROBINSON

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Coach Bill Cowher finally confirmed on Tuesday that the Pittsburgh Steelers' worst-kept secret: Duane Staley is in at running back and Jerome Bettis is out again.

The move has been considered a formality since Staley was given a \$4 million signing bonus in March, but the Steelers had never made the change official and Cowher diplomatically split time between the two in exhibition games.

Staley, at 29, is three years younger than Bettis, has had less wear and tear than the NFL's No. 6 career rusher and, unlike Bettis, can be used as a receiver out of the backfield and on third downs.

The Steelers plan to use Bettis as a change-up back and in short-yardage situations, the role they envisioned when they began last season with the faster Amos Zereoue at running back. Zereoue was a flop and Bettis eventually won his job back, but the early-season benching probably kept Bettis from finishing below 1,000 yards (811) for only the third time in his 11-season career.

"He [Bettis] has a lot of respect for Duane, and Duce does for Jerome," Cowher said Tuesday. "I think it is a healthy situation and hopefully we will be able to give them both the ball."

That's the reason Staley left the Eagles after seven seasons. He felt he didn't get the ball enough.

Staley had 1,000-yard seasons in 1998, 1999 and 2002. But forced to split time with Brian Westbrook and Correll Buckhalter last season, he was limited to 96 carries, 200 fewer than the season before.

Seahawks Pro Bowl Jones reports

By TIM KORTE

The Associated Press

KIRKLAND, Wash. — With the regular season under way this week, standout tackle Walter Jones signed a one-year deal and joined the Seattle Seahawks for practice Monday.

Jones, designated the team's franchise player, missed this year's training camp while he waits for a long-term contract offer.

Jones has missed most of the previous three training camps, as well.

"I'm here now," Jones said. "The season has started, and that stuff is behind me now. Whatever happened was going to happen, and right now I'm here to help this team win."

He was asked if he'll be ready

for Sunday's opener at New Orleans.

"I don't think I have a choice," Jones said. "The coaches will look at me good and assess me."

Jones is coming off his fourth Pro Bowl season and will earn \$7.1 million this year, the average pay for the NFL's highest-paid offensive linemen. He was Seattle's first-round draft pick in 1997.

"We knew he'd show up today or tomorrow," guard Chris Gray said. "It's just good to have him back. Good guy."

Jones said his teammates welcomed him back. Gray insisted none of the linemen was resentful that Jones skipped training camp again.

"It's a business. That's what it is. This will probably extend his career," Gray joked.

Coach Mike Holmgren, on the

other hand, wasn't thrilled his top lineman arrived so late again, saying nobody — players or agents — should assume Jones will be playing in Hawaii again next February.

"He's an exceptional player, no question about that," Holmgren said. "He's one of the best I've ever seen. But does every player need a little work to be at his best prior to the first game? I think they do."

"Logic tells me they do. Can an exceptional player play at a high level? Yeah. Will he be as good on game day as he would be in Week 10? We'll see," Holmgren said.

Jones' agent, Roosevelt Barnes, didn't return telephone messages seeking comment.

A depth chart released after practice had Jones listed first — ahead of Floyd "Pork Chop" Womack — at left tackle.

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Rix knows he can silence critics with title

Florida State QB trying to focus on field, not detractors at school

BY STEPHEN F. HOLDER

The Miami Herald

FTALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Chris Rix, sometimes it's a cell phone call. Other times, it's a passerby he has never met. But, mostly, it's the e-mails. That's where the Florida State quarterback gets the bulk of his criticism, right in his student e-mail account — the address of which is available via the school's Web site, like it is for every other FSU student.

Some of his critics are tactful. Others get downright personal, questioning everything from his field vision to his manhood, often using vivid adjectives not suitable for print in this newspaper.

There were times not so long ago when Rix would give his detractors the satisfaction of stooping to their level.

"In the past, I would reply to it," he said of the e-mail messages.

Now, instead of poring over critical e-mails, articles or phone messages, Rix says he is pouring all his energy into making his last and most important collegiate season his best.

"You can't control what other people think," he said. "You can only control how you react to it. I can't really care what people think because it's not really a distraction and hold me back. Over the past couple seasons, that has really helped. And it's the reason I'm still here, because if not, I probably would have left this place."

Rix's last stand

Love him or hate him, it's hard to disagree that he has been hard being Chris Rix. He inherited a job last held by a Heisman trophy winner (Chris Weinke), and did so as an inexperienced redshirt freshman quarterback.

He plays the most prominent position at a prominent program where success is translated as winning national titles.

Lastly — but in no way is this the least of his burdens — Rix has had to endure the disparagement that comes with being the poster



ST. PETERSBURG TIMES/SHS

FSU QB Chris Rix (16) has taken a lot of abuse for not leading the Seminoles to a national championship, but he's not lacking in talent. He needs 2,315 passing yards to surpass Chris Weinke for the top spot on the school's career list, and his 3,107 yards last season are the fourth-highest for an FSU passer in a season.

Stats, but no title

boy for the shortcomings of a team that has been a college football powerhouse the past two decades.

But after three roller-coaster seasons, this day has come. A strong senior season can supercede all the bad reads, the untimely fumbles, the unexplainable interceptions. One strong senior season for Rix could forever silence the chorus of doubters that echoes in his head.

"This year, I know this is my last shot.... This next three- or four-month window, I need to be the most focused that I've ever been. I'm excited about the opportunity to lead this football team, and do it not so much through what I say or anything else, but by what I do. Do it through actions."

Rix will leave FSU as one of the school's greatest quarterbacks, statistically. He trails only Weinke in career yardage and will surpass him with 2,315 more yards — an easily reachable goal for Rix.

His 3,107 yards in 2003 rank fourth all-time on FSU's five-season passing list, and his 60 career touchdown passes rank second, also behind Weinke.

It's what Rix doesn't have that gets the most attention: a national championship and a win against Miami. Consistency is what has been missing from Rix, something he readily admits, and it's not for a lack of athletic ability.

"I can't think of another quarterback in the country that matches

him physically," running back Len Washington said.

Said coach Bobby Bowden: "I think the biggest thing for Chris is don't make foolish mistakes. You're going to make mistakes, but don't make foolish ones.... A lot of times, that happens to a great athlete: He thinks he can do anything. He thinks he can throw that ball behind his back and complete it, and they get in trouble doing that."

The list of Rix mistakes, unfortunately for the Seminoles, is alarmingly long.

■ Against Miami as a freshman, he committed six turnovers in a 49-27 loss.

■ Against Louisville in 2002, Rix's overtime interception ended FSU's only OT possession and sealed the loss.

■ Later that season, three Rix turnovers led to easy scores for Notre Dame as the Irish humbled the Seminoles at Tallahassee. Rix was detained two days later.

At times like those, the criticism became nearly unbearable for Rix. After last year's game at Clemson, a fan went so far as to hang a makeshift banner on the side of the road, in plain view of the players' entrance to Doak Campbell Stadium, with derogatory remarks.

Internet message boards seized with harsh comments.

It didn't help that early in his career Rix gained a reputation for being cocky, and the perception has remained. Last year, when he parked illegally on campus twice in the span of a few days, fellow students were more than willing to call campus police to have his SUV ticketed.

A fighter

Regardless, Rix says he is ready to persevere in the face of whatever confronts him, whether it's harsh words or defensive line-men.

"'Fight' is one word that, this year, is engraved in my heart.... In everything I do, I have to fight. It's life, it's relationships, it's school, sports, family, friends. You have to fight. And I think my career has kind of showed that."

He believes his ability to fight has helped him reach this point, on the cusp of a senior year he hopes will yield a national title. He learned the concept at an early age, when his mother, Theda, died of cancer when Rix was 7.

"Nothing comes easy, and in my life, nothing really has," said Rix, from Santa Margarita, Calif. "People think I just played and got to Florida State and I had a storybook upbringing. I have had a lot of great things happen to me, had a great life. But it has been tough at times." In the meantime, as the e-mails keep coming, Rix has his reaction down pat.

"I simply smile and delete it because they can get pretty bad. I just pray that there's more to their lives than football."

Canes, Seminoles trying to get back on track after Frances

BY MARK LONG

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Florida State and Miami were originally scheduled to play Monday. Instead, they spent the day trying to recover from Hurricane Frances.

It wasn't easy, but it was necessary as the teams prepared for the postponed season opener Friday night at the Orange Bowl. Frances forced the No. 4 Seminoles to practice indoors while they mourned the loss of coach Bobby Bowden, a 15-year-old grandson and former son-in-law.

John Allen Madden, a 45-year-old former Florida State

linebacker who played under Bowden, and his son, Bowden, were killed Sunday when their car was hit by a utility truck that was helping restore power outages caused by Frances.

"Most of us have been around all of the Bowden family a great deal, and it is a loss shared by all of us," Florida State athletic director Dave Hart said in a statement. "Words can't express the grieving I know the Bowdens are going through."

The Seminoles closed practice to the media and had no player or coach availability Monday. Bowden and offensive coordin-

ator Jeff Bowden attended the workout.

The fifth-ranked Hurricanes practiced Monday for the first time in four days because of Frances.

"Guys' minds were not on football," center Joel Rodriguez said. "Guys' minds were on their families, their houses, their property and their safety. It's understandable.... To have three days where you're not even thinking about football, but about your house being blown away or whatever, it's a lot to come back from and get right into the flow."

Several players' families and friends were still without power and water Monday.

Miami defensive back Devin Hester, from Riviera Beach, said the roof on his parents' home collapsed, flooding every room, and a tree crushed his mother's car.

"It didn't turn out too good," Hester said. "It's kind of bad knowing that I'm here and my mom, they're in Palm Beach struggling. I'm just trying to keep my focus and concentrate on football right now."

Miami receiver Ryan Moore, from Orlando, said Hurricane Charley affected his family more than Frances. But having two hurricanes within three weeks left him with some troubling nights.

"I've never seen anything back to back like that," Moore said. "All of us from Florida, we're as used to it as you can get. You've just got to go with the punches." Another hurricane could affect the rescheduled game. Hurricane Ivan, a Category 2 storm with 105 mph wind, lost strength Monday but was on a path because it's so far away that it near Florida's Atlantic coast Friday.

"With what's happened with the last two, Frances and Charley, there's certainly a definite concern," Hurricanes coach Larry Coker said. "Maybe we were on a bit because it's so far away. But it's very powerful, and it's on track."



South Carolina head coach Lou Holtz talks with running back Demetris Summers (31) during Saturday's game against Vanderbilt.

Gamecocks adjusting to upbeat Holtz

Veteran coach working to 'change the culture' at South Carolina

BY PETE IACOBELLI
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — When coach Lou Holtz set out to revamp South Carolina's losing culture this offseason, he took a look at himself as well.

And the Gamecocks like the change they see — and don't hear.

Gone, at least for now, are the woe-is-me laments Holtz is famous for. Instead, it's a hopeful Holtz who's preparing the Gamecocks (1-0, 1-0 Southeastern Conference) for No. 3 Georgia (1-0) on Saturday.

"I'm not saying he was the devil," senior offensive lineman Jonathan Alston said Monday. "But he really has toned down the negatives."

Players say Holtz was around them more after spring and fall practices, joking and talking in the locker room instead of rushing to his office high above the stadium.

"So far, I like it," Alston said.

While Alston says the players learned not to put much stock into Holtz's early-week words of despair, it was difficult for some to handle.

"Different relatives would call up and tell you what coach Holtz said," Alston said.

The first two weeks of this season, though, Holtz has carefully tucked up his team's strong fall camp, steady improvement and solid play in a 31-6 victory at Vanderbilt.

It's what Holtz had in mind last November after the Gamecocks closed with four straight losses — including a 63-17 drubbing by rival Clemson — to miss the post-season at 5-7. Against Clemson, Holtz saw his team quit and knew more serious action than just a few hotshot freshmen or tricky plays was needed.

Holtz fired four coaches who had been with him his first five seasons at South Carolina. He took control of the offense from his son, Skip. He began a weekly class for players where they discussed issues like responsibility, citizenship and how to be good teammates. Holtz calls the process "changing the culture."

South Carolina athletic director Mike McGee said Holtz's style change goes back the past couple years when he took a more hands-on role at practices.

"It's not that he was a grouch before," McGee said. "He's enjoying, and the team is enjoying the additional participation."

Holtz and his staff, which includes four assistants with head coaching experience, have much to prepare for this week. Besides the obvious challenge of facing a national title contender in Georgia, the Gamecocks will deal with the frenzied atmosphere that always occurs when ESPN's College GameDay shows up on campus, like it will this Saturday.

"One thing that I've believed you should do but is not always done is focus on the positive," Holtz said. "Nobody in the country gives you a chance, but GameDay must think so. GameDay must think this is going to be a heck of a ballgame."

Holtz says he'll always look for an upside of any situation, no matter if his reputation says otherwise.

"I think you've got to try and turn everything as a positive and not as a negative," he said. "You look down and say, 'What can we gain positively about this challenge? How can we learn? How can we grow?'"

Freshman, senior will split time at quarterback for No. 6 LSU

BY MARY FOSTER
The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Quarterbacks Marcus Randall and JaMarcus Russell both struggled to move LSU's offense against Oregon State last weekend.

They changed places four times and between them managed to generate just enough points for an overtime victory.

That was enough to keep both of them in the plans for No. 6 LSU's game against Arkansas State on Saturday, coach Nick Saban said.

"I think it's a tribute to both guys that they went in and out of the game in the making, but both ended up finding plays that

contributed to the success that we had coming back in the game," Saban said of the 22-21 victory. "So, I think that it would be safe to say that we'll probably end up playing two quarterbacks."

Randall, a fifth-year senior whose experience came when he stepped in for an injured Matt Mauck for half the 2002 season, was supposed to have locked up the job. But he had problems in the opener, including seeing a touchdown erased by a penalty.

At halftime, Russell, a 6-foot-5 redshirt freshman, was sent in. Based on history, Saban said, they had found it best when Randall was struggling to take him out and let him settle down.

Russell had his own problems,

but he also threw two touchdown passes to tie the game.

Then in overtime, Russell had cramps and had to leave the field.

So Randall stepped in again and ran for a touchdown that proved to be the game winner.

"I'm not sure that I'm ready to say who's going to start next game," Saban said. "But I'm not sure that that's really the issue here. I think the issue is that we need better execution at the quarterback position. We want both

guys to continue to improve, we need both guys to continue to improve and we're going to work both guys so that they can improve and give them both an opportunity to most likely play in this game."

Saban said there was no lack of effort or letdown even though the Tigers trailed until the final two minutes. There was a lack of execution at every position, however. We looked like seals running around on dry land out there," Saban said.



LSU QB JaMarcus Russell, a redshirt freshman, struggled at times but threw two touchdowns passes in the second half against Oregon State on Saturday night.

Just: Given a second chance, Singh takes No. 1 from Woods

JUST, FROM BACK PAGE

"It doesn't matter who it is," Singh said. "If I'm playing my best, I can beat anybody. I have never been one who is intimidated by Tiger. Then again, if you are playing poorly, it is intimidating to play against him when he is playing well."

Woods hasn't played his best this year. Four times he has gone into the second round with everyone wondering if he would make the cut. His drought in the majors is up to 10, and more troubling is that he has only given himself two good chances to win during that stretch.

Woods was at his best in Boston — "The best ball-striking week of the year," Woods said. Singh was simply better.

That makes Singh's accomplishment even more rewarding. With another chance to become No. 1 in the world, Singh went head-to-head with the best player in command of his shots.

Earlier in the year, that wasn't the case. Singh first closed in on Woods by winning Pebble

Beach in February. Woods returned from a four-month break and outplayed him in the next three tournaments, including a victory at the Match Play Championship.

Singh won back-to-back weeks in New Orleans and Houston while Woods was away, again getting closer than ever to No. 1 in the world. Again, Woods answered the challenge by finishing no worse than third in his next three tournaments, each time leaving Singh behind.

But right when it looked like Ernie Els had emerged as the chief threat to No. 1, Singh beat Woods at the Buick Open, beat everyone in a playoff at the PGA Championship and then left no doubt by taking on Woods in the final group of the final round at the Deutsche Bank.

Singh will stay No. 1 for the rest of the month, maybe the rest of the year. And now he faces the burden that Woods knows all too well.

What does he do for an encore? As for Woods, at least now everyone can believe him when he says he's close.

He is only 45 points behind Singh in the world ranking.

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High school scoreboard/schedule

Guam girls volleyball

Friday's summary
Southern det. Guam High 20-25
At Agat, Guam
Spilliks wins — Guam, Sarah Bushong 4, Defense digs — Guam, Maryann Riano 8
Saturday's summary
Guam High det. Seoul American 25-13, 14-15, 15-17
Spilliks wins — Guam, Sarah Bushong 4, Defense digs — Guam, Kim Capogon 3
Noteworthy — First win in school history for Panthers over Sharks.

This week's schedule

Japan football

Friday, Sept. 10
 Zama American at Yokota, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 11
 American School in Japan at Robert D. Edgren, 1 p.m.

Japan girls volleyball

Friday, Sept. 10
 Robert D. Edgren at Yokota, 5 p.m.
 Yokohama International at Yokota, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 11
 American School in Japan at Seisen International, 7 a.m.
 C. Kinick and E.J. King, International, 7 p.m.

Japan girls volleyball

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 Yokohama International at Yokota, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 11
 American School in Japan at Seisen International, 7 a.m.
 C. Kinick and E.J. King, International, 7 p.m.

Kent International at International Christian University, 3:30 p.m.
 Korea International at International Christian University, 3:30 p.m.
 Seoul International at Osan American, 4 p.m.

Korea tennis

Thursday, Sept. 9
 Osan American at Seoul American, 3:30 p.m.

Friday, Sept. 10
 Taegu American at Taegu Christian International, 3:30 p.m.
 Seoul International at Osan American, 4 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 11
 Seoul International at Osan American, 9 a.m.
 Taegu American at Osan American, 9 a.m.
 Pusan American at Taegu Christian International, 9 a.m.

Monday, Sept. 13
 Seoul Foreign at International Christian Seoul, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 15
 Taegu Christian International at Seoul American, 3:30 p.m.
 Seoul Foreign at Taegu American, 3:30 p.m.
 Seoul International at Osan American, 4 p.m.

Korea cross country

Saturday, Sept. 11
 Seoul American, Pusan American and Taegu American at Seoul Foreign/Korea International, 10 a.m.

Preschool
Saturday, Sept. 11
 Okinawa Activities Council preschool (ambrose) at Kadoma High School, Kadoma Base, 3 p.m.

Okinawa football

Saturday, Sept. 11
 Okinawa Activities Council preschool (ambrose) at Kadoma High School, Kadoma Base, 3 p.m.

Okinawa girls volleyball

Friday, Sept. 10
 Kadoma at Kubasaki, 7 p.m.

Guam football

Saturday, Sept. 11
 Simon Sanchez at George Washington, 3 p.m.
 Guam International Christian Academy vs. Guam High at Eagle Field, 3 p.m.

Guam cross country

(all start times 5 p.m.)
Thursday, Sept. 9
 Note Name at George Washington, 3 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 10
 Father Kennedy Memorial Academy of St. Paul Christian at Tiana, 3 p.m.
 St. John's vs. John F. Kennedy at Two Love's Point, 3 p.m.
 Simon Sanchez at Southern, 3 p.m.

Guam girls volleyball

(all start times 5:30 p.m.)
Thursday, Sept. 9
 Harvest Christian Academy vs. Simon Sanchez at Guam Sports Complex, 3 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 10
 St. John's at Southern, 3 p.m.
 Academy of Our Lady at St. Paul Christian, 3 p.m.
 John F. Kennedy at Guam High, 3 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 11
 George Washington vs. Simon Sanchez at Yigo, 3 p.m.

Harvest Christian Academy vs. Simon Sanchez at Guam Sports Complex, 3 p.m.
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Carroll aiming to finish 1st title

Far East crown has eluded Pusan American standout

By DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

Brianna Carroll is racing against time, literally and figuratively.

After three years of prep athletics dotted with frustrations, near-misses and, at last, Pusan American Panthers' three sport

three sport hopes she can begin her senior year with a Far East High School Cross Country Meet gold medal.

"I'm a lot more prepared. My mind is a lot more prepared," Carroll said. "I've been training in my mind to get ready for it. My father ran cross country in high school, he knows so much about it, he's put me on a training schedule. It's pretty intense. It's whipped me into shape."

Carroll got off to a solid start in the Korean-American Interscholastic Activities Conference season, running a 3.1-mile race Saturday in 20 minutes, 16 seconds, more than three minutes ahead of her nearest challenger.

It wasn't quite her fastest time. Carroll posted a 19:37 in the KAIAF championship last Nov. 1 — and finished second, a familiar position during her Pusan years.

For two straight springs, her Panthers girls soccer team finished second in Far East Class A tournaments. Even when she captured top individual honors, such as MVP of the Class A basketball tournament last February, her team finished seventh.

She also finished ninth in the 2002 Far East cross country meet at Minut Hill Golf Course on Guam as a sophomore.

Carroll and her coach, Gary Canner, think she has a chance at the individual gold. Also, Pusan American boasts an experienced



Courtesy of Jerry Carroll

Pusan American senior Brianna Carroll finished ninth in the Far East meet as a sophomore.

girls lineup that has an outside chance at a team banner — which would be a first in school history. "We have five really solid girls, and they keep improving," Carroll said. Included in that group is her sister, Cassie, a freshman.

"We'll just see," said Canner, in his fourth year as the Panthers' coach. "We have a number of returning runners with experience, and we have high hopes for our girls' team."

Pusan American faces challenges.

■ **Defending team champion** Kadema of Okinawa — the only DODDS team champion in the Far East meet's 26-year history — lost 2002 individual girls champion Kim Kyle and defending Okinawa Activities Council boys champion Cliff Johnson. But returning is 2003 All-Island girls champion Niki Kaurzlarich and a squad rich in experience. "The team is excited. It will be an exciting year," said coach Tom McKinney, who also returns Jon Turner, Kevin Copeland, Aaron Zengdes and sisters Dianne and Jennifer Abel, each top-10 All-Island meet finishers. "I have strong girls, and the boys will be all right. You can

dream big."

■ **Kadena's** island-rival Kubasaki bolstered its ranks with the addition of junior twins Crystal and Candace Sandness, who each finished in the top 10 of last year's Utah state championships in less than 21 minutes.

■ **Seoul Foreign**, with defending KAIAF girls champion Alana Bennett and a boys team led by KAIAF record-setter Kazuki Guzman, expects to enter Far East. Bennett finished last year's KAIAF championship meet seven seconds faster than Carroll.

■ **St. Mary's International's** boys of Tokyo have their own challenger for the boys individual crown: J.M. Kwak, the defending Kanto Plain Association of Secondary Schools champion.

Kwak might get a stern challenge from the flagship runner of the Far East meet's host school.

■ **Robert D. Edgren** had been expected to transfer after last school year, to Minot Air Force Base, N.D., but is sticking around for a couple of months, and might possibly finish his years in the Pacific by running at Far East.

Sanchez won his first five races last season, becoming the top DODDS runner in Japan, before finishing behind Kwak twice. He lost to Kwak 15:46-16:10 on Oct. 18 and again 15:45-16:01 on Oct. 25, both at Tama Hills Recreation Center west of Tokyo.

What of his chances of taking a Far East gold on his home course?

"I'm not going to let it get to me too much, not get all caught up in the competition," Sanchez said. "I want to win, trust me. But we'll see."

Many eyes likely will be on Carroll, as she tries to turn the first third of her senior year into "that championship season."

"She has a chance," Canner said. "She's a worker, she's been training and she has as good a chance as anybody."

N.D., Sanchez hopes to go out with Far East boys individual 3.1-mile gold medal after placing first in two DODDS Japan meets and second in two meets last fall.

■ **Chris Cervillo**, senior, Zama American, finished fourth in Kanto Invitational, a Far East meet, second behind Sanchez and third overall in the league standings a year ago. Middle school's best boys runner since James Harris in the late 1980s.

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Top women take a tumble

No. 1 Henin-Hardenne, No. 2 Mauresmo lose in quarterfinals

BY HAL BOCK

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Elena Dementieva shook off a subpar service that produced 15 double-faults, an aching left thigh and an upset stomach to advance to the semifinals of the U.S. Open with a 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (1) victory Tuesday over Amelie Mauresmo.

The loss cost Mauresmo a chance, at least temporarily, to take over the No. 1 ranking in the women's singles. She can still reach No. 1 unless Lindsay Davenport wins the Open. Davenport, seeded No. 5, plays a quarterfinal match Wednesday against unseeded Shinobu Asagoe.

Mauresmo came into the Open seeded No. 2 and had the opportunity to take over the top spot in the rankings less than 24 hours after defending champion Justine Henin-Hardenne was toppled from No. 1 by a 6-3, 6-2 loss to Nadia Petrova on Monday night.

Just over two weeks ago, Mauresmo lost the gold medal match to Henin-Hardenne at the Athens Olympics, so the Open was an opportunity for revenge.

The sixth-seeded Dementieva, playing with her left thigh heavily taped, made 48 unforced errors, never had an ace and often hit softball serves. But Mauresmo was unable to take advantage.

There were 14 service breaks in

the match, seven for each player.

At 4-5 in the first set, Dementieva called for the trainer.

After brief treatment, she retreated to the locker room, leaving Mauresmo seated next to the court, waiting to serve for the set.

When play resumed, Mauresmo saved four break points and won the set on her third opportunity with an ace.

In the second set, with the No. 1 ranking in her sights, Mauresmo managed to win just three winners and Dementieva seized the opportunity to stay in the match.

Playing more like the finalist she was in the French Open than the first-round loser she was in the Australian Open and Wimbledon, Dementieva stayed with Mauresmo in the third set and was up 5-4, a game away from victory, when she summoned the trainer again, this time for an upset stomach.

Stretching between points, often bent over in pain, Dementieva somehow found a way to survive. She summoned strength and resolve and when the third set went to a tiebreaker, the Russian dominated to advance.

"It is a big disappointment," Mauresmo said. "I am a little angry with myself. I had some good occasions but I didn't make it."

"I'm not happy with my net game. I should have done better

with that."

No. 1 was not on her mind, Mauresmo said.

"I don't calculate," she said.

Next for Dementieva will be the winner of Tuesday night's marquee quarterfinal between No. 8 Jennifer Capriati and No. 3 Serena Williams. It marks the third time Capriati and Williams have met in a Grand Slam quarterfinal this season, following the French Open and Wimbledon.

In Tuesday's opening match, former champion Lleyton Hewitt reached his third consecutive Grand Slam quarterfinal, defeating Karol Beck 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 for his 14th consecutive match victory.

Hewitt, who won this title in 2001, put on an impressive display of shotmaking and covered the court effortlessly as his fiancée, former No. 1 Kim Clijsters, watched from the stands.

Beck reached the round of 16 in a Slam for the first time and stayed with Hewitt in the first set before being broken in the ninth game. Hewitt then served for the set, established control of the match and crushed the rest of the way.

"The first set, the guy played pretty good tennis," Hewitt said. "But I made a lot of mistakes out there. I tried to step it up at 4-all. Played a good game to break. After that, he sort of went away a little bit."

Beck was disappointed in himself.

"I was expecting much more from me," he said. "Today, it was



France's Amelie Mauresmo prepares to serve against Elena Dementieva of Russia in the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open in New York on Tuesday. Mauresmo, the No. 2 seed, lost 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (1).

not really my day. I played not really good."

Hewitt was never broken and needed just 1 hour, 40 minutes to advance.

It was Hewitt's fourth straight-set victory in the Open and gave him 19 wins in his last 20 matches and victories in 43 of the last 47 sets he has played.

Hewitt came into the Open seeded No. 4 following consecutive hard-court titles at Washington and Long Island. The victory over Beck pushed Hewitt's hard-court record for the year to 40-5, second only to Andy Roddick's 47-8 record for the season. This is the Australian's best surface, and his 17 hard-court titles trail only Andre Agassi for the most titles on hard courts. Agassi has 45.

Hewitt will play the winner of the match between Tommy Haas and Tommy Haas that completed Tuesday's day program.

Henin-Hardenne's loss marked the earliest exit by the Open's top-seeded woman since Billie Jean King pulled out during her third-round match in 1973 because of illness.

"I never felt good in this tournament. I never felt free in my head. I never felt 100 percent in the court," Henin-Hardenne said. "It wasn't my day."

Seeded 14th, Petrova finished off the biggest win of her career with an ace down the middle. She had lost all five previous matches against Henin-Hardenne, and it took until the second set for Petrova to believe her time had come.

"I was a little bit doubting that I can still pull this match out because, knowing her experience, I was thinking she would change something in the game and start playing maybe different tennis, be more consistent, be in charge of the game," she said.

Bulls' Mutombo says he's ready to join Yao in Houston

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Center Dikembe Mutombo has agreed to a trade that will send him from the Chicago Bulls to the Houston Rockets in exchange for Eric Piatkowski, Adrian Griffin and Mike Wilks, according to a newspaper report.

"It is where I have wanted to be all along," Mutombo told the Houston Chronicle Monday night. Mutombo, 30, of Kansas, where he is participating in the NBA's Basketball Without Borders outreach program. "I told them a long time ago that it was my wish, and I'm so happy that it was granted."

Mutombo thinks playing for Houston will be a "perfect fit," playing alongside starting center Yao Ming, the Chronicle reported in its online edition Monday night. Mutombo told the newspaper he agreed to the deal Friday. He said he had already talked to Rockets assistant coach Patrick Ewing and others.

Rockets General Manager Carroll Dawson told the Chronicle the deal hasn't been finalized. But Dawson said Mutombo would be a good mentor for Yao.

"One of the things that you want to do when you add a backup center is add somebody with a real basketball talent who doesn't do what everybody else does," Dawson said. "This is one of the all-time shot blockers in the league. He's been a real profes-

sional in the locker room and on the court. I think he'd be a great mentor type for Yao Ming. I think he will be great for him to go against in practice every day."

Rockets spokesman Nelson Luis told The Associated Press the team had no comment on the report Monday night.

Mutombo, a 7-foot-2 center, has averaged 11.7 points and 11.7 rebounds in his 13 years in the NBA. He was traded to the Bulls in August as part of a deal that sent Jamal Crawford and Jerome Williams to the New York Knicks.

Greek sprinter Thanou questioned by prosecutor about motorcycle crash

ATHENS, Greece — Greek sprinter Katerina Thanou was questioned Tuesday by a prosecutor investigating a suspicious motorcycle accident that also involved Kostas Kentaris after they missed a drug test.

Thanou, who took silver in the 100 meters in Sydney, and Kentaris, the surprise 200-meter gold medalist in 2000, could not be found at the Olympic Village for an Aug. 12 doping test. Hours later, they said they were involved in the accident that happened because they were rushing back to the Olympic village to be tested.

Prosecutor Spyros Mouzaitakis has been investigating the crash.

Kentaris and Thanou have denied any wrongdoing.

ESPN to launch in March

BRISTOL, Conn. — ESPN will launch a

new multimedia college sports initiative in March 2005 that includes a new 24-hour television network and content from ESPN.com and ESPN The Magazine.

ESPN will also include information from ESPN Radio, ESPN Mobile (wireless) and ESPN Broadband, George Bodenheimer, the president of ESPN and ABC Sports, said in making the announcement Tuesday.

The highest-profile facet of the new initiative will be the ESPN television network, which will carry approximately 300 games live — primarily Division I football and men's and women's basketball — in the first year. The network will also cover baseball, softball, volleyball, lacrosse, hockey, wrestling, spring football and select high school football games.

Czechs reach Hockey World Cup semis

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Milan Hejduk scored two goals as the Czech Republic routed Sweden 6-1 Tuesday night in the quarterfinals of the World Cup of Hockey.

The Czechs, who finished next-to-last in the European pool, will face the winner between Canada and Slovakia in the semifinals when the tournament moves to North America this weekend.

On Monday night, Finland became the first team to reach the semifinals as Mikko Eloranta tipped a shot past Olaf Kolzig with 3:22 left in its 2-1 win over Germany. Finland will play the winner of Tuesday night's match between the U.S. and Russia.

China reduces number of planned Olympic stadiums from 10 to 5

BEIJING — China will build five new stadiums for the 2008 Beijing Olympics instead of the 10 that were originally planned to save money.

The plan was announced by the government Tuesday, less than a month after the International Olympic Committee requested China slow down construction in order to cut costs.

Liu Qi, president of the Beijing Olympics organizing committee, told the ruling Communist Party newspaper that construction should be "based on the principles of meticulous calculation and thriftiness."

Beijing has said it expects to spend \$24.2 billion on new subway lines, roads and other facilities by 2008.

Gelding DM Chicago wins \$2M sprint

RUIDOSO DOWNS, N.M. — DM Shikago, a 2-year-old gelding with a quirky name and a furious finish, ran the fastest 440 yards in the history of the All American Futurity to win the \$2 million sprint.

Ridden by Juan Vazquez, the gray broke near the lead in the run down the Ruidoso Downs straightaway, went to the front at about the halfway point and was pulling away when he hit the wire three-quarters of a length ahead of runner-up Take Off Jess.

DM Shikago went the 440 yards in 21 seconds, the fastest trip since that distance became the standard for the futurity 31 years ago.

Astros caught fire in nick of time

Houston was close to being dismantled before recent surge

BY JOEL ANDERSON
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Two weeks before the final trade deadline of the season, Houston Astros General Manager Gerry Hunsicker began to wonder if making the playoffs was merely a pipe dream.

The Astros were two games below .500 and seven behind in the race for the NL wild card on Aug. 17. With tempting trade offers from contending teams coming in daily, Hunsicker gave serious thought to dismantling the team and preparing for next season.

"I started thinking that maybe it's not in the cards for us this year," Hunsicker recalled. "I figured that if we didn't make a move soon, then it wasn't going to happen and we had to be realistic."

Oh, how things have changed in Houston.

The Astros extended their season-high winning streak to 10 games with an 11-5 victory over Cincinnati on Monday, staying 1½ games behind wild-card leader Chicago. Idle San Francisco is second in the race, just a game ahead of the Astros.

Houston has been baseball's best team during the past three weeks, winning 18 of 21 and compiling the best record in the majors since Aug. 15.

With a month left in the season, the Astros are finally becoming the playoff contender everyone thought they'd be at the start of the year.

Just much later than expected. "Earlier, we were trying to figure out what was going on," Houston left fielder Craig Biggio said. "The team was just in a funk and I've never seen a team stay in a funk that long. Now we're just swinging the bats, we're more confident."

Not so long ago, Houston appeared on its way to a disappointing finish after coming in with expectations of the club's first World Series appearance in its 42-year history.

The Astros were surprisingly pumelless on offense, ranking in the bottom third of the majors in scoring despite the midseason acquisition of All-Star center fielder Carlos Beltran. Their highly touted pitch-



Houston Astros' Jeff Kent (12) is congratulated by Lance Berkman after Kent hit a grand slam during a game against the Cincinnati Reds last week. Houston, which was below .500 at the trade deadline, has won 18 of 21 to climb back into the NL wild-card race.

ing staff struggled as both Andy Pettitte and Wade Miller spent time on the disabled list, with Pettitte eventually undergoing season-ending elbow surgery. Emerging young shortstop Adam Everett was also sidelined with a broken left wrist.

Even with the midseason firing of manager Jimmy Williams and hiring of the more fiery Phil Garner, the Astros continued to fall out of the NL Central race and fade in the wild-card chase.

Hunsicker and owner Drayton McLane were lost for answers. Local sports talk radio shows and fan Web sites buzzed over the steady collapse. Fans booed at the slightest hint of trouble during games.

"I've never seen a team that basically went into a three-month hibernation," Hunsicker said. "Especially with the talent we have on this team. There were so many low points, I can't even pick them out."

Hunsicker had repeatedly emphasized all season that the club loaded up solely for an autumn finish — Beltran is a free agent, Roger Clemens was coaxed out of retirement, Jeff Kent and Craig Biggio are in the final years of their contracts and Jeff Bagwell is nearing the end of his career.

But with the Astros dropping out of con-

tention and a rebuilding season on the horizon, Hunsicker began to entertain offers from teams still in the playoff hunt.

McLane eventually put an end to all of the trade talk.

"I felt all along we were going to be a champion," McLane said. "I didn't know how it was going to happen because it looked discouraging. But I knew we were going to make a run."

The Astros did emerge from their slump, starting with a 5-4 win at Montreal on Sept. 15. Since then, Houston has improved to a season-high 11 games over .500 at 74-63.

Houston's revival has started with the offense. The Astros lead the majors with 160 runs since Aug. 15 and have scored six or more runs in a club-record 10 consecutive games — the span of their current win streak.

"I've never seen a team this hot," said Cincinnati pitcher Aaron Harang, who gave up four homers against Houston for a second straight start Monday.

Harang even counted St. Louis, which has the league's best record at 92-44 and is 18½ games ahead of the Astros in the NL Central, among that list of teams.

"St. Louis has been hot," Harang said. "But I think they've got St. Louis."

St. Louis streak snapped at nine

The Associated Press

SAN DIGO — Ryan Klesko singled in the go-ahead run with none out in the eighth inning, and the San Diego Padres won 7-3 to end the St. Louis Cardinals' nine-game winning streak on Monday.

With the score tied at 3 and the bases loaded in the eighth, Klesko hit a chopper over the head of first baseman Albert Pujols to score Ramon Vazquez.

The Padres quickly blew it open against reliever Cal Eldred (5-1). Khalil Greene followed with a sacrifice fly, Terrence Long had a pinch-hit RBI single, and another run scored on the play on a throwing error by Pujols.

Brewers 9, Pirates 5: Brady Clark drove in four runs, and visiting Milwaukee scored six times in the third inning.

Gary Glover (1-0) won in his Brewers debut.

Cubs, Braves feel effects of Frances

The Associated Press

The Chicago Cubs and Florida Marlins will play two doubleheaders to make up the three-game series that was wiped out last weekend in Miami by Hurricane Frances.

One game has been rescheduled as part of a doubleheader this Friday at Wrigley Field beginning at 12:00 p.m. CDT.

The teams, who met in the NL championship series last October and are currently battling for the wild card, will also play a doubleheader at Pro Player Stadium on Sept. 20, an off day for both teams.

Although Frances has been downgraded to a tropical storm, its effects were still being felt on Tuesday as heavy winds and persistent rain prompted the Atlanta Braves to reschedule Tuesday's game against the Philadelphia Phillies.

The storm forced the first rainout this year in Atlanta and only the fourth in the eight-year history of Turner Field. A steady rain began Monday night and continued through Tuesday, showing no sign of relenting before the scheduled 7:35 p.m. start.

It was the first time the Braves had postponed a game since June 6, 2003.

Japan players call first-ever strike

Los Angeles Times

TOKYO — In a rare show of muscle, Japan's professional baseball players called their first-ever strike Monday, warning they will sit out all weekend games throughout September unless the powerful group of corporations that runs Japanese baseball backs off plans to shrink the number of teams.

Japan's Pacific League announced this summer that it wants to merge the struggling Orix BlueWave with the Kintetsu Buffaloes, a move seen as the first step in reducing the number of pro teams from 12 to 10 and an eventual swap of the existing two-league setup for a single one.

"We have to fight," said Atsuya Furuta, a catcher with the Yakult Swallows who heads the

752-member players' association that gave its leadership the right to strike in a vote held last month.

Fans have reacted angrily to what they see as a self-interested retreat by a cozy club of owners unwilling to surrender influence by considering options other than consolidation.

Critics say clubs and jobs could be saved by better sharing of TV revenues or by allowing new ownership groups to buy into baseball.

The players are demanding the merger be shelved for a year while all sides work out a way to resurrect the economic and entertainment fortunes of Japanese baseball.

But a strike would be a huge gamble for athletes accustomed to playing the role of grateful workers in a sport that operates on almost feudal lines.

"The owners denied the players the right to even speak to them, and the union needed to stand up now or lose the support of the fans," says Itaru Kobayashi, a former pitcher for the Chiba Lotte Marines in the early 1990s.

So far, the owners have shown no inclination to let anyone meddle in their game. They rejected an offer last month by rich young media mogul Takafumi Horie to buy the Buffaloes and keep them alive, then they showed no interest in allowing him to start a franchise that would keep the number of teams at 12.

The owners greeted Monday's strike announcement by vowing to go ahead with the merger, warning they could sue the players for any lost TV and ticket revenues.

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Yankees drop request for forfeit, add doubleheader

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Yankees with Tuesday their request that a postponed game with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays be forfeited, and Major League Baseball announced the game would be made up as part of a doubleheader Wednesday.

On Monday, the Yankees asked the commissioner's office to award them a forfeit over the Tampa Bay after the Devil Rays failed to arrive in time Monday because of travel problems due to Hurricane Frances. Commissioner Bud Selig made it clear that he had no intention of awarding a forfeit.

"We appreciate the continuing

accommodation of the New York Yankees and their fans and apologize to them for any inconvenience that the delays may have caused," Bob DuPuy, chief operating officer of the commissioner's office, said in a statement Tuesday.

"As the commissioner made clear, it is critical that the outcome of the pennant races be determined on the field."

The Yankees were 2½ games ahead of Boston in the AL East heading into Tuesday's games.

The teams were originally scheduled to play a doubleheader Monday starting at 1 p.m., but the start time was pushed back two hours on Sunday. Because of the

AL Roundup

delay in Tampa Bay's arrival, the commissioner's office told the teams to play one game at 7 p.m. and said it would decide later on when to reschedule the second game.

The Yankees won Monday's game 7-4. Alex Rodriguez, hitting second in New York's lineup for the first time, through with his first hit with the bases loaded in over a year.

Rodriguez hit a three-run double for his first bases-loaded hit since July 2003 and helped win the series 7-4 (7-0) with his sev-

enth straight decision. A-Rod was 6-for-10 in such situations this season.

"He looked more aggressive," said Yankees manager Joe Torre, who considered the move for three weeks. "We'll continue to do it as long as it seems comfortable."

Red Sox 8, Athletics 3: Boston won for the 12th time in 13 games by beating baseball's best home team to open a seven-game road trip.

Manny Ramirez and David Ortiz paired up to hit consecutive homers for the sixth time this season, and Ortiz added a three-run double to keep the Red Sox 2½ games behind the Yankees in the AL East.

Bronson Arroyo (8-9) pitched 6½ strong innings to win his third straight decision, and Bill Mueller and Dave Roberts each hit RBI doubles in the seventh to give the Red Sox a 4-2 lead.

Barry Zito (10-10), the loser in Game 5 of the AL division series last year against Boston, took the loss.

Indians 5, Mariners 0: C.C. Sabathia (11-9) threw a five-hitter for his second career shutout and Omar Vizquel hit a two-run homer in the eighth to a victory at Safeco Field.

Seattle's Ichiro Suzuki went 2-for-4, getting singles in the third and ninth innings to push his season hits total to 226.

Yankees forfeited sportsmanship in spat with Rays

This might be the most vile, most despicable act of unsportsmanlike conduct ever committed by a professional sports franchise.

Monday, the New York Yankees actually had the audacity to ask the commissioner's office to award them a forfeit victory because the Tampa Bay Devil Rays did not arrive in time for a scheduled start because of travel problems in Florida caused by Hurricane Frances.

John Smallwood

Originally, the teams were scheduled to play a doubleheader at 1 p.m. at Yankee Stadium. Due to the hurricane, the start time was pushed back two hours. Because of the Devils Rays' travel delays, the commissioner's office instructed the teams to play one game, beginning at 7 p.m., and said it would decide later when to reschedule the second game.

The Devils Rays arrived at Yankee Stadium at 6:05, and lost the game, 7-4.

"The rule states that if your team is here and ready to play, and the other team isn't here and not ready to play, there should be a forfeit, and we believe there should be a forfeit," Yankees President Randy Levine said.

The Yankees, who were at the stadium by noon, have taken issue that the Devil Rays waited until Monday morning to try to leave Tampa.

The Devil Rays' home games against Detroit on Saturday and Sunday were postponed. Bob DuPuy, the chief operating officer of the commissioner's office, said the Devil Rays were asked to investigate leaving Friday night or Saturday. DuPuy said Rays owner Vincent Naimoli told the commissioner's office his team was trying to make arrangements to leave Florida but couldn't.

Devil Rays General Manager Chuck LaMar said the team never intended to leave for New York until Sunday night or Monday.



New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez belts a double against the Tampa Bay Devil Rays during the fourth inning Monday in New York. The Devil Rays lost 7-4, and the Yankees would like them to forfeit the first half of the doubleheader, which they missed because of Hurricane Frances.

"We decided, and we made the right decision, we'll stick by that decision, to stay with our families," LaMar said. "We wanted to stay in the Tampa Bay area, wait out the storm with our families."

Levine told reporters that if the facts as the Yankees understood them were true, then the game should be forfeited.

"There were plenty of opportunities to get out of Tampa on Saturday," Levine said. "The airports were open until 3 or 4 o'clock."

Fortunately, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig doesn't appear as if he's going to give this farce of a request more than a moment's thought.

"Given the stage of the season we are in, and the exciting pennant races, it is critical that we do everything to decide the championship on the field," Selig said in a statement.

Before the Yankees withdrew their request on Tuesday, Levine had threatened that the Yankees might refuse to reschedule the game for this week even if ordered to do so.

Talk about giving new meaning to the term, "Damn Yankees." I know that technically, the Yankees have an argument, but for them to even suggest a forfeit at a time when Florida is just beginning to assess the damage caused by the second hurricane to hit in

three weeks shows a callousness that is difficult to comprehend even by New York standards. Maybe Levine hasn't been paying attention to anything but the American League East standings, but here's some of the stuff Florida has gone through since Mother Nature unleashed her fury early Sunday morning.

The state had the largest evacuation in its history, with 47 of 67 counties being affected. More than 73,000 people still were staying in shelters as of Monday. Estimated insured losses range from \$2 billion to \$10 billion.

Yet Levine is upset that a baseball game had to be postponed.

Yes, the Yankees are correct when they say the Devil Rays could have come to New York earlier, especially since their Saturday and Sunday games against Detroit were postponed because of the pending arrival of Frances.

The Tigers left Tampa after their game Friday night. But there was a big difference between the Tigers leaving and the Devil Rays leaving. Most of Detroit's players don't make their homes in the Tampa-St. Petersburg region. Catcher Ivan Rodriguez is one who does, and he decided to stay home with his family and missed Monday's game against Kansas City in Detroit.

Can anyone blame him, or any other player who would do the

same?

To ask the Devil Rays players to leave on Friday or Saturday was asking them to leave wives and children and homes with a hurricane on the horizon.

Three weeks ago, Hurricane Charley slammed into Florida and caused 27 deaths and an estimated \$7.4 billion in damage.

The course plotted for Frances would take it right over some of the areas in Tampa that Charley had damaged.

I know we sometimes think of professional athletes as being disassociated from the real world, but there is no fantasyland shelter from the pending reality of a hurricane. People die in hurricanes, lives are destroyed.

The idea that the Devil Rays would leave their families and homes before Frances made landfall so they could make sure they were at Yankee Stadium in time for a baseball game Monday is preposterous.

There probably wasn't a thing any player could do against the fury of Frances, but I know if I were in that situation, I'd stay with my family as long as necessary. And if that meant missing a game, then so be it. I'd expect any person with a shred of human compassion to understand.

I'd like to give the Yankees organization as much benefit of the doubt as possible. You have to believe that any franchise, no matter the circumstance, could sink so low that it would use the tragedy of a hurricane to try to gain a leg up on the competition.

Still, you can't help but wonder if the Yankees would have done something so crass if their 10½-game lead over Boston hadn't been cut in half.

Shame on the Yankees for even bringing up such a thing, but I guess that franchise's shame is missing, just like its heart.

John Smallwood is a sports columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News.

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SPORTS



Miami, Florida State
getting back to game
at hand, Page 33



Just rewards

Showing shades of Woods' 2000 season, Singh fittingly took over No. 1 ranking in showdown

By DOUG FERGUSON
The Associated Press

TOAKVILLE, Ontario Tiger Woods has put himself in some peculiar positions this year.

He has struggled just to make the cut. Tee shots have ricocheted off corporate tents and small children. He has spent Sunday afternoons cleaning out his locker, not standing on the 18th green posing with the trophy.

The strangest sight of all is "No. 2" next to his name in the world ranking.

Woods' record streak as the best player in golf — 264 consecutive weeks at No. 1 — came to an end at the Deutsche Bank Championship when Vijay Singh turned in a performance that even a computer couldn't dispute.

It was just a matter of time before the 41-year-old Fijian got his due.

It was the manner in which Singh reached the pinnacle of his amazing career that made it even sweeter.

Tied with Woods down the stretch on the TPC at Boston, with the gallery expecting Woods to respond to the most imminent threat to his throne, Singh pulled away with three birdies on the final five holes to win by three shots and become only the 12th player to be No. 1 in the 18-year history of the world ranking.

"I've achieved what I wanted to do," Singh said.

"I won a major. I won quite a lot of tournaments, and at the same time became No. 1 in the world. The whole season has been a great one."

His season looks like the kind that once only belonged to Woods. Singh's six PGA Tour victories are three times as many as anyone else. With two months left in the season, he already is a lock to win player of the year. He has a \$2.2 million lead on the money list, and with at least five more tournaments to play, is a cinch to win his second straight money title.

What next?

If Singh were to follow the script, he would hit a 6-iron from 218 yards out of a fairway bunker and over the water to birdie the final hole at Glen Abbey this



Vijay Singh, above, not only ended Tiger Woods' 264-week run as the world's No. 1 golfer, but he's won six tournaments and \$7.9 million this season. With at least five tournaments to play this season, the 41-year-old Fijian also has a shot at breaking Woods' single-season earnings record of \$9,188,321.



Woods might be only .45 points behind Singh in the world ranking, but he's a long way from his stellar 2000 season, when he dominated the PGA Tour by winning nine tournaments and over \$9 million.

week and win the Canadian Open.

That was the signature shot of Woods' record-breaking season in 2000. He won nine times, earned more than \$9 million and set himself so far apart from everyone else that it seemed his

next challenge would come from someone who had not even been born.

It seems only fitting that the Canadian Open celebrates its 100th anniversary by returning to the Abbey with the No. 1 player in the

world as the star attraction.

And there are shades of 2000. Singh has won nearly \$7.9 million, already the second-highest total in PGA Tour history. He still has the American Express Championship (\$7 million) and the Tour Championship (\$6 million) on his schedule, which leaves him in excellent position to break Woods' single-season earnings record of \$9,188,321.

He needs three more victories to match Woods' nine PGA Tour titles in 2000, which is not out of reach considering Singh has won three of his last four starts and is rarely far from the top of the leader board.

His confidence has never been lacking, especially now.

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